ISSUE 1 | SEPTEMBER 2009

Fighting Fantazine

THE FIGHTING FANTASY FAN MAGAZINE

4 NEW MONSTERS AS **THE PIT** IS REOPENED!

WHERE IN THE WORLD IS GUNDOBAD?

THE LAND OF CLASH OF THE PRINCES GETS A GRILLING!

INTERROGATION WITH I.N.-J.O.K.E.S.

APPOINTMENT WITH F.E.A.R. IS EXAMINED IN THE FACT OF FICTION

BATTEN DOWN THE HATCHES!

JONATHAN GREEN TALKS AS STORMSLAYER BLOWS INTO STORES!

A **BRAND NEW** *FIGHTING FANTASY* MINI ADVENTURE! DARE **YOU** DISCOVER THE CAUSE OF THE **resurrection of the dead**?

Letter from the Editor

Welcome, weary travellers one and all, to what is hopefully the first of many issues of *Fighting Fantazine*. This is a new fan magazine devoted to the *Fighting Fantasy* series created by Steve Jackson and Ian Livingstone, and the fantasy world of Titan that many of those gamebooks are set in. It has been a long road getting here, since *Warlock* closed its doors to patrons in 1986, but at last the *Fighting Fantasy* fan once more has a place to go.

For myself, this magazine seems like a natural outgrowth of the *Titannica* wikia and associated Yahoo! group *Titan Rebuilding*. At the wikia, and the group, much of the work presented is an analytical piecing together of the disparate elements of *Fighting Fantasy* canon. This is in order to try and forge as complete a picture of Titan as is possible from the source material, while at the same time presenting a factual record of the creation and development of the gamebook range.

While this fan magazine will hopefully feature some of that effort, I hope that this endeavour will also provide an outlet for those more creative impulses that are not part of the remit for the wikia, such as art and fiction, as well as reviews, opinion and interviews.

To that end we present the first part of a two-part interview with writer Jonathan Green which helps launch our first issue in style. In future issues we hope to present interviews with other *Fighting Fantasy* alumni, both writers and artists, alongside an interesting selection of fan-produced material.

We've articles taking a look the creatures and lands of Titan, as well as one that kicks off a series of articles that examine the content of the books in detail for all sorts of snippets of interesting or amusing information. Finally, we hope to present a mini *Fighting Fantasy* adventure each issue for your entertainment and enjoyment.

This last paragraph is where YOU, the reader, come into the picture. This is our first issue, so we would appreciate a lot of feedback about what you feel works or doesn't work, as well as what you would like to see in future issues. If something isn't here, then it is perhaps because we have no one yet ready to undertake producing it. One example of this was the planned inclusion of a gamebook reviews section, "The Arcane Archive", which has failed to appear in this issue because we have yet to find someone willing to undertake organising it. This is but one area of the magazine that could be your chance to volunteer to contribute to!

Meanwhile, as you read this, planning is underway for a second issue to surface around January of next year, a peek at the contents of which can be found on page sixty-seven. We've some material already lined up as you can see from the preview, but, as noted above, we're keen to have more people on board. So if you have something related to *Fighting Fantasy* that you are keen to write, by all means get in touch with us.

Now, after delaying you long enough, read and enjoy!

Alex

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Games.groups.yahoo.com/group/titan_rebuilding/
and the wikia *Titannica* found here:
Fightingfantasy.wikia.com/wiki/Main_Page

CONTRIBUTIONS
Contributions to the fanzine in the form of letters, articles, reviews, fanfiction, artwork, comics et cetera are welcomed and readily invited. These can be sent to the editor via e-mail as long as it is a standard format like JPEG and the scan is of high quality (1200 dpi preferred).

NEXT ISSUE DEADLINE:
January 8th 2010

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Fighting Fantazine

THE FIGHTING FANTASY FAN MAGAZINE

ISSUE 1 | SEPTEMBER 2009

FEATURES

06 **Interview:**
THE GRASS IS ALWAYS GREENER
In the first part of his interview, **Jonathan Green** talks to *Fighting Fantazine* about the *Bloodbones* saga and his latest gamebook title *Stormslayer*.

14 **Mini Adventure:**
resurrection of the dead
by **Alexander Ballingall**
YOUR home town of Bandur Green is being plagued by something out on the nearby heath which has already claimed the mind of one of YOUR friends. With no help coming, YOU take it upon yourself to seek out the truth. Can YOU survive the horrors hidden by the night?

50 **The Fact of Fiction:**
APPOINTMENT WITH F.E.A.R.
Steve Jackson's superhero-in-tights adventure is the first *Fighting Fantasy* gamebook to go under the microscope in this series of articles examining each adventure in detail.

60 CAN'T FIND GUNDOBAD ON A MAP? MAYBE WE CAN HELP...
The kingdom of Gundobad from the two-player adventure *Clash of the Princes* has proven fairly difficult to place within the world of Titan. **Warren McGuire** however, is willing to give it a go.

64 **Everything I Really Need to Know I Learnt from Reading *Fighting Fantasy* Gamebooks**
First of a series of articles as **Ed Jolley**, in tongue-in-cheek ruminations on the gamebooks, pokes fun at some of their absurdities and drawing tenuously-related "life lessons" from them.

REGULARS

04 OMENS & AUGURIES
56 OUT OF THE PIT
66 FIGHTING DANTASY
67 FIGHTING FANTASY COLLECTOR

Turn to paragraph **1**.

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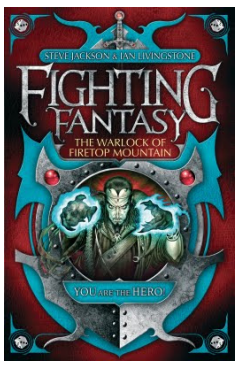
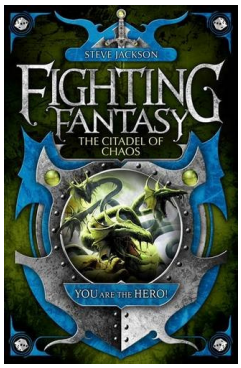
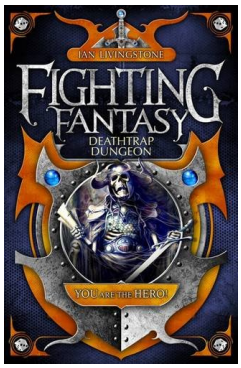
Where possible, permission from the artists has been sought for the reproduction of *Fighting Fantasy* art. If you have any queries about this, please contact the Editor. "He looks up at you over half-moon glasses and smiles a sinister smile."

OMENS & A Storm Rolls In!

The *Fighting Fantasy* range resurfaces in September with the publication of Jonathan Green's *Stormslayer*. Due out on the 3rd from Wizard Books, and with a recommended retail price of 5.99 GBP, Green's sixth *Fighting Fantasy* gamebook is a re-tooling of an idea conceived during the time the range was with Puffin Books. Being reprinted alongside the new book are the first three from the Wizard range: *The Warlock of Firetop Mountain* (Steve Jackson & Ian Livingstone), *The Citadel of Chaos* (Jackson) and *Deathtrap Dungeon* (Livingstone). As with *Stormslayer*, they are released at 5.99 GBP on September 3rd.

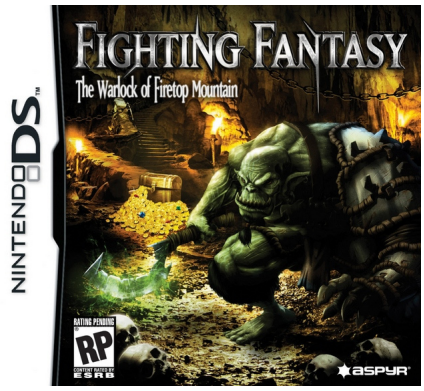




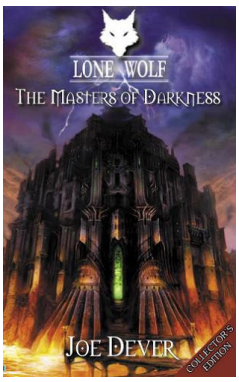


All four books sport a new cover layout to mark the relaunch and *The Warlock of Firetop Mountain* new cover art from Martin McKenna. The books are presented in the bigger "B format", last seen in the final AFF title *Allansia*, with simplified rules and pre-rolled stock characters for readers to use. Each book will also feature teaser content from other books in the range. In addition to this, the previous Wizard range is referred to as "Series 1" and this relaunch as "Series 2", which ushers in a new book number order. The three reprints are numbered #1 through #3, with *Stormslayer* being numbered #4. On top of this, a press release this month from Nick Sidwell at Wizard Books indicates that at least two new titles are planned for 2010 alongside further reprints of older titles. Based on listings at Amazon.co.uk, the first half of the new year will see three reprints and one new title. In February comes *Creature of Havoc* (#5) and *City of Thieves* (#6), with *Bloodbones* (#8) and new title, *Night of the Necromancer* (#7), in April.

Accompanying the relaunch will be a revamp of the official website *Fightingfantasy.com*, a test version of which has already been spotted online. Meanwhile, in other *Fighting Fantasy* news, Big Blue Bubble and Aspyr Media plan to release an adaption of *The Warlock of Firetop Mountain* for the Nintendo DS on October 26th for 29.99 USD. Big Blue Bubble are also behind the *Fighting Fantasy* game application for the iPhone/iPod Touch, with plans for adaptions of gamebook titles every couple of months, beginning with *The Warlock of Firetop Mountain* due sometime in either October or November this year. No word on prices as yet.



Lone Wolf Soldiers On

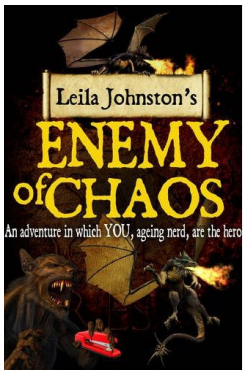


The volunteer team at ProjectAon.org have continued their tireless work and most recently they have released an electronic version of a Holy Grail of gamebook collecting. Book 22 of the *Lone Wolf* series, *The Buccaneers of Shadaki* is available for free download from their site. Considering that finding a copy of the original Red Fox edition for less than 200 USD is very hard nowadays, this certainly comes as good news for gamebook fans who aren't willing to spend money like philatelists in order to indulge in their hobby.

And speaking of saving money, there are also good news related to the Mongoose *Lone Wolf* reissues. The company now offers a series of Mega-Deals which allow you to acquire batches of Lone Wolf books at a discount price. The first one of these is the "Kai Lord Mega-Deal": for 80 USD you get books 1-5 in the series and the two already-published Lone Wolf novels (*Glory and Greed* and *Dragons of Lencia*). The "Magnakai Mega-Deal" gives you books 1 through 12 and the two novels for 240 USD, and the "Magnamund Mega-Deal" gives you books 13 through 32 plus the novels for 400 USD. Meanwhile, the reissued books 11 (*Prisoners of Time*) and 12 (*The Masters of Darkness*) are announced for release in September

AUGURIES

2009 and book 13 (*The Plague Lords of Ruel*) in November 2009.



Ageing Nerd Battles Chaos this September

Snowbooks is releasing the comical gamebook *Enemy of Chaos* by Leila Johnston this September. It has been described by its author as "a sort of fiction/humour/games/nostalgia book" and apparently is inspired by the *Red Dwarf* TV show and the work of Stephen Fry. Visit EnemyofChaos.com for more info. At 250 pages, it will retail for 7.99 GBP.

Choose Your Own Space Opera

A new science-fiction gamebook series, the *Galactic Chronicles* series, has begun with the release of the first title in the series, *Freeworld*. Author Richard Terry has made this book available through online seller Lulu.com, but unlike many other gamebooks available from this publisher, it is only available in hardcopy. Priced at 11.19 USD, it features a space opera plot, 300 text sections and a full rules system which requires dice.

***Star Wars* Pick-a-Path Battle**

And speaking of space opera, British publisher Ladybird has released two *Star Wars* pick-a-path books: *Tethan Battle Adventure* and *The Way of the Jedi*. Both entries in the *Star Wars - The Clone Wars: Decide your Destiny* series have a recommended retail price of 5.99 GBP.

What's strange about this is that this series shares the exact same title, setting and style with another pick-a-path series currently being published by Grosset and Dunlap in the United States. The second title of the American series is titled *The Lost Legion* and is authored by Tracey West. Also set in the Clone Wars milieu, this book is interesting since it allows the reader to choose from a variety of professions at the beginning of the adventure. Recommended retail price is 4.99 USD.

***RuneQuest* Solo Adventure**

The current iteration of the *RuneQuest* role-playing game, published by Mongoose, has for the first time seen a solo adventure released for it. Auxo Limited has published *A Trip to the Priory*, a pdf priced at 11.95 USD and available through RPGNow.com and DriveThruRPG.com. At 44 pages, this adventure involves a dungeon crawl in search of a stolen artifact.

Tunnelling Trolls Ahead

Outlaw Press has released a new *Tunnels and Trolls* solo by Michael A. Stackpole, titled *The Elemental Dungeon*. This 32-page solo, priced at 14.00 USD, is described by the author in these terms: "throughout this solo you will face the ancient elements: Earth, Air, Fire, Water. The foes you combat and the treasure you find will have some connection with that theme, in ways you can only imagine". Visit Outlaw-Press.com to purchase it.

***Leyenda Elfica* Tabletop**

One for Spanish gamebook fans: the acclaimed Spanish gamebook series *Leyenda Elfica* has given birth to a tabletop role-playing game based on its fantasy setting, Valsorth. *El Reino de la Sombra* (*The Kingdom of Shadow*) is scheduled to appear later in 2009. Priced at 30.00 EUR, it features 300 pages of content. Visit NoSoloRol.com for more details.

One from the Far East

Gamebooks have also been quite popular in Japan, though electronic branching-path fiction is more common and popular in that country than in Europe or the USA. To reflect this, Broccoli is currently in the process of releasing a gamebook meant for play on the Nintendo DS console. The book, titled *Sword World 2.0 Game Book DS*, includes a full game system and simulates die rolls. It is based on one of the most popular Japanese tabletop fantasy role-playing games, *Sword World*, which is already on its second edition. Currently there seem to be no plans of translating it into any languages other than Japanese. The official website is at Broccoli.co.jp/game/gamebook/swordworld/. It is slated for August 10, so it should be available by the time you read this. The standard edition will retail for 4,480 JPY while a limited edition (featuring cover art from the original 1989 edition of the game) will retail for 6,280 JPY.

Into the Maelstrom

Arion Games has done a good job at reviving and supporting the classic 1984 *Maelstrom* role-playing game. First they released *The Maelstrom Companion*, a rules supplement, and now they bring out *Maelstrom Quarterly 1 - Tournaments*. This is the first in a series of regular supplements for the multi-player game. This 19-page supplement on jousting and tournaments is available on RpgNow.com and DriveThruRPG.com for 2.00 USD.

***Dragon Warriors* for Dummies**

Magnum Opus press have released a free introductory kit for the new edition of the *Dragon Warriors* RPG, which is set in the same world as the *Golden Dragon* and *Blood Sword* gamebook series. *Dragon Warriors: Introductory Book* contains "the full character-generation rules, two of the game's seven basic character classes, the combat system, full background on the territory of Ellesland and a short introductory scenario". Available as a PDF from DriveThruRPG.com and RPGNow.com. **FF**

The Grass is Always Greener

Fighting Fantazine talks to author **Jonathan Green** in the lead up to the release of *Stormslayer*

Jonathan Green *should be a familiar name to those who read* Fighting Fantasy *gamebooks, the writer having recently penned his sixth title for the range in the form of September's* Stormslayer. *Jon kindly took some time out of his busy schedule to answer some questions put to him by* Fighting Fantazine.

HISTORY BECAME LEGEND, LEGEND BECAME MYTH – *BLOODBONES*

Did you harbour any hopes that the *Fighting Fantasy* range might make a come back or did the Wizard re-launch catch you by surprise?
There was always that (what felt like a) vain hope that one day I might get to write another *Fighting Fantasy* gamebook, but on the whole the re-launch did take me by surprise, although I actually found out about it before *The Warlock of Firetop Mountain* was re-published.

How do you think Wizard Books have handled the range since the 2002 re-launch?
Very well.

Did you have any expectations that Wizard would reprint any of your books?
When I learnt of the re-launch I got in touch with Steve Jackson to see if there would be the possibility of writing new gamebooks and he informed me that he had always hoped to see *Bloodbones* in print one day. It took a couple more years, but in the end it did.

Who is the editorial team at Wizard that you work with on the books?
Simon Flynn, publishing manager, and Nick Sidwell, a fantastic editor and very erudite gentleman. He worked on both of my non-fiction Icon titles.

Is there any difference in approach between Puffin and Wizard to the *Fighting Fantasy* books?
That's a tricky one to answer. I am probably more aware of the whole publishing process now and there has certainly been a higher level of consultation and conversation about the range. Puffin employed a freelance consultant editor to manage the series, Wizard keep it all in-house. I didn't have any direct contact with Ian or Steve back in the 90s but we now regularly exchange emails and the occasional telephone call.

STEVE JACKSON AND IAN LIVINGSTONE
BLOODBONES
BRAND NEW ADVENTURE
A Fighting Fantasy Gamebook in which YOU are the hero!
SPECIAL LIMITED EDITION

STEVE JACKSON AND IAN LIVINGSTONE
HOWL OF THE WEREWOLF
BRAND NEW ADVENTURE
A Fighting Fantasy Gamebook in which YOU are the hero!
SPECIAL LIMITED EDITION

Have Wizard Books allowed you greater freedom than Puffin as to what was acceptable to include in your books? If so, why do you think that is?
Yes, because the times they are a-changing! What more can I say? Of

course, I'm also considerably older and more experienced than I was when I started writing for *Fighting Fantasy* seventeen years ago!

What was is like coming back to the manuscript roughly ten years after you had originally penned it?
Very exciting. I gave the text an overhaul and obviously extended some bits and added others, but it felt great to be writing a *Fighting Fantasy* adventure again. The Background section begins, 'It all started ten years ago'. I didn't put that into the new edition; it was always there. It just seems strangely ironic/prophetic now.

You've said before that you had completed a 300 paragraph version for Puffin, along with the map. What parts were restored from your original idea to bring the adventure up to 400 paragraphs?
Some sections got more paragraphs ascribed to them, I reinstated the encounter with the Giant Octopus, but most of it I made up for the new 400 paragraph version, including the Rainforest Sprite and Jolly Roger, the Vampire pirate.

How much effort do you go to to choose names that echo the themes or locations of your story?
More than is necessary probably. Names of characters have always been very important to me, and still are. There were obviously a few references to *The Tempest* in *Bloodbones* – the Caliban-like Balinac being the most obvious – and even as far back as *Spellbreaker* names meant something. Coxcomb the Clown from that adventure was named after the technical name for a jester's hat.

Mike Posen was the artist originally lined up to illustrate the book under Puffin. Did you ever get to see any completed artwork?
Yes. I've got photocopies of all his illustrations. Some worked better than others and when I learnt that they were going to be re-done for the Wizard edition I was able to make some changes, dropping a couple which weren't very inspiring and put in some others instead. That's why there's no picture accompanying the attack by the Hellhog and Devilfowl.

BACK WITH A BITE – *HOWL OF THE WEREWOLF*

How much of this book was a mere idea rather than concrete proposal prior to the end of the Puffin range?
All I knew was that I thought it would be cool to set an adventure around you trying to stop yourself turning into a werewolf. I think I wrote something along those lines when I was 12 or 14 but I hadn't kept any of those notes from that time. I knew how I wanted the first encounter to play out, which became the pursuit of Prince Garoul in the finished thing, but beyond that, everything else had to be created from scratch.

You exceed the regular 400 paragraph allotment by some distance. How did you get this past Wizard Books?
I was some way into writing *Werewolf* when I realised that to really do some of the ideas in it justice, I would ideally like to extend the paragraph count. As anyone who has played the adventure will know, there are various side quests, some of which were adaptations of ideas I had once had for other gamebooks (such as the Abbey of the Black Monks).

I emailed Wizard to ask if it would be a problem and they were very accommodating. I ended up cutting a few encounters anyway, which would have taken the paragraph count even higher, not because of any strictures placed on me by Wizard but simply because there wasn't time to get it all written before the book's deadline.

Why do you think it took the range so long to do a Werewolf adventure?
I don't know. I think since Puffin's tenure ended, with the improvement in CGI used in movie special effects, Werewolves have seen a revival, along with other fantasy monsters. Perhaps that has since filtered through my psyche and the references weren't there in the early days of *Fighting Fantasy*. But to be honest, this is all conjecture. I simply don't know.

How much research into Werewolf myths and legends did you do and how much made it into the final book?
A far bit actually, in both cases. I have always had a fascination with folklore, particularly that surrounding Vampires and Werewolves, and I dug out my old books when I started plotting the adventure. A number of the characters in the book are named after people from 'real' Werewolf legends, such as Vereticus and Straub. And of course Varcolac is actually a wolf demon from Romanian folklore.

What prompted you to play about with the stats for SKILL and STAMINA?
I wanted the steady change you experience throughout the adventure as you start to morph into a werewolf to make a real difference to the gameplay. The modifications I made to calculating your Initial SKILL and STAMINA allowed me to make that happen.

Each one of your gamebooks so far has featured some form of stat outside the regular three. Do you feel that a *Fighting Fantasy* adventure is limited by sticking to only those three? Would you try writing one that way or do you find other stats and skills allow for greater game flexibility?
Er, no, yes, and yes. I think part of the reason for introducing additional rules is to keep the gameplay and ideas that can be presented in a gamebook fresh. But, using *Deathtrap Dungeon* as an example, a *Fighting Fantasy* adventure that only uses the regular three of SKILL, STAMINA and LUCK can be just as good, if not better, than those that have a lot of extra rules.

Who are the three "Godfathers" the book is dedicated to?
The three fine gentlemen who are my children's actual godfathers. Simple as that.

All your previous books have featured a map of the area. Why does *Howl of the Werewolf* not?
I ummed and ahhed about including a map, partly because I used to really enjoy drawing them. In the end I decided not to put one in simply because your character has never visited Lupravia before, and so doesn't know where everything is. Not having a map to refer to adds to that sense of mystery and not knowing where you're going, and, more importantly, not knowing how far you've still got to go.

How much are things like the 'stained-glass window knight' a deliberate nod to something outside of *Fighting Fantasy* or an idea that seems cool but you have no idea where you might have come across it before?
Usually those sorts of encounters are in part a nod to some

piece of popular culture coupled with the fact that I think it would make a cool encounter in the book.

But wait 'til you see *Stormslayer*; I've managed to get everything from Stephen Sommers' *The Mummy* to Michael Bay's *Transformers* in there, all in a traditional *Fighting Fantasy* adventure. Just you wait!

You feature Vampires a reasonable amount in a werewolf book, was this done on purpose given the close setting to Vault of the Vampire's Mortvania?
Yes, and simply because so much Werewolf myth is tied up with legends of vampires. It also gave me an excuse to write my own *Fighting Fantasy* Vampire castle, even though that had already been done within the series.

You do a bit of world building with *Fighting Fantasy* books. Which appeals more: finding an unexplored area and exploring or explaining it, or finding a gap in established canon and "joining the dots"?
The former. Much of the world building develops as I'm plotting the individual encounters, trying to give the adventure an internal logic of its own. I like the fact that with *Howl of the Werewolf* you can't actually learn everything about the Wulfen family or the principality of Lupravia at one sitting, even if you complete the adventure successfully. To find out all of the bloodline's dark secrets you have to play through the gamebook several times, choosing different routes each time.

THE NEW KID BLOWS INTO TOWN – *STORMSLAYER*

Now that you have other non-*Fighting Fantasy* books out with your name on the front cover, it is hard to see a book you've written with "Steve Jackson and Ian Livingstone" instead at the top?
It's all part of the agreement I have with Steve and Ian, so it doesn't annoy me, no. What does annoy me is when perfectly literate people don't even bother to read the title page inside carefully enough to realise who has written the book. Steve and Ian have never claimed to have written *Bloodbones*, *Howl of the Werewolf* et al; the fact that I'm the author has never been hidden. Besides, it's the Jackson and Livingstone names that sell the *Fighting Fantasy* brand.

This began life as *Eye of the Storm* in the Puffin era. How much of the story had you nailed down at that point and how much has changed now that you've come to write it?
From what I can remember, as with *Howl of the Werewolf*, it was mainly the central idea that I had sorted out. Going through my old notes (of over a decade ago) I found a page or two about *Eye of the Storm* but I threw much of these out. One of the things I dropped was... but if I give that away it might spoil the surprise of what is in there! What I will say is that almost all of it was created from scratch, other than the setting of the finale, the kingdom it takes place in, and I had various creatures ear-marked from *Out of the Pit* that I didn't think had been used before but that I thought seemed appropriate.

Is it the traditional 400 paragraphs or a different length?
It's 400 paragraphs long. *Howl of the Werewolf* was – as far as I'm concerned – a one of. It was an indulgence, the result of me making the most of the opportunity to write my first brand new adventure in a very long time, making the most of an idea I had had for even longer.

There's also the practical matter of how long a book takes to write and how much you get paid for the job. To have made it any longer would not have made good financial sense, I'm afraid. Such is the life of a freelance writer. Besides, it was commissioned to be 400 paragraphs long.

Given that long-time players are aware of the many tricks used to conceal paths through books, do you look for different ways of achieving this now?
No. I've actually tried to tone that sort of thing down. At the end of the day I feel that I'm in the entertainment business. When people sit down to read one of my books I want them to put the book down half an hour, an hour, two hours later and feel that they've enjoyed the time they've spent reading (or in the case of *Fighting Fantasy* playing) it.

If people want to cheat, and still get a buzz from the imaginative encounters and dramatic set pieces, then that's up to them. If they want to play the adventure fairly, then I feel that I should be just as fair in how I set out the information they need to know. The names into numbers is always a handy one and will prevent low level cheating and I've become a fan of using codewords. I like the idea that a person's experiences and information gathered can be just as effective in influencing events later in the adventure as can collecting specific objects.

In terms of game mechanics, is there anything that could be done with the *Fighting Fantasy* gamebooks that hasn't already been tried?
Oh yes, but you'll just have to wait and see to know what those things are...

What can you tell us about the story without giving away too much of the plot?
You are a renowned adventurer, much lauded throughout the kingdom of Femphrey. Whilst recuperating after your latest successful quest, the village you are visiting suffers a freak thunderstorm. It soon becomes apparent that the storm wasn't entirely natural and so you set out to find out who was behind it.

The nature of the character was something I was keen to explore. I liked the idea that this gamebook would likely be played by people who had played a fair few before, and your fame affects certain encounters during the adventures (and not all to the good).

Your character starts the adventure not really knowing what their mission is and part of the fun of *Stormslayer* is discovering what's going on as the story progresses.

Will there be a map?
I thought about creating one – it certainly wouldn't have given anything away – but no, there's no map.

You've mentioned elsewhere that email has made a difference to process that the art has gone through for this book. Has it made a difference to the process of writing a gamebook since *Spellbreaker* was written back in 1992?
Yes, hugely. When I finished a book for Puffin, having written it by hand and the typed it up on my Amstrad word processor, I had to print it out with every new paragraph starting on a new page and then have it photocopied twice. I had to keep one copy and post two to the publisher. This meant sending approximately 1000 sheets of A4 paper in a large box – and it cost a fortune.

I now just have to email one Word document to the publisher and they email back the copyedited manuscript for me to check over. It's certainly a much greener process than it once was.

Is there a *Fighting Fantasy* artist you'd like to have work on your book cover or interior illustrations but haven't had?
John Sibbick, definitely. Also, Russ Nicholson and Brian Williams.

How did Stephen Player come to be illustrator for your latest gamebook?
Wizard wanted to try someone new for the re-launch, in part, I believe, because Martin McKenna wasn't available. I know the editor had a few artists in mind, but in time he sent me a select portfolio of Stephen's work. I then did my own research and discovered that he had created various illustrations for Terry Pratchett's Discworld. Having agreed between us all that he would be a good artist to try, he then still had to do a try-out pieces and, with that accepted, he was commissioned and set to work on the rest of the illustrations.

What about the new cover layout?
I can confirm that the *Stormslayer* cover is a mock-up only. I've now seen the finished artwork and it's very 'cool' indeed. You'll soon see why.

The main point of the new layout is to make more of the *Fighting Fantasy* name and brand. When a new, or re-issued, book comes out there will be no doubt that it is a *Fighting Fantasy* gamebook. Before, you had to look very closely to see the name *Fighting Fantasy* on the cover, and there was nothing about the cover art that tied the books in the series together. And of course the lurid green spines were already (thankfully) a thing of the past.

What do you think prevents the range from being bigger with readers than it currently is?
Exposure, I think. I know that Wizard are trying very hard to make people aware of the books and get them into their hands. Word of mouth will play its part in time, once the new editions come out this September. I mean, having played a *Fighting Fantasy* gamebook, unless you're violently allergic to the whole fantasy genre, what's not to like?

Do you feel that there is still a market for gamebooks in this computer game/MMORG reality that is today?
Yes. Other franchises such as *Doctor Who* and *Star Wars* now have new gamebooks being produced and they are nothing like as complex or exciting or well-illustrated as *Fighting Fantasy*. It's just a case of getting them out there to the youth of today, so that they can see just how cool the books are. Besides, you don't need a power supply or massive plasma screen telly to enjoy a gamebook. You can't play your Xbox on the bus, or at your gran's (probably).

Many children's books are now issued as hardbacks. Do you think that might a direction for the range to go in?
To be honest, I have no idea. It worked for the 25th anniversary edition of *The Warlock of Firetop Mountain*, but I expect production costs would rule it out for the series as a whole.

What are your thoughts on the current re-branding strategy?
Any efforts to get the books out there and noticed again can only be a good thing. A re-launch will inevitably raise the series' profile and hopefully the addition of new books – like *Stormslayer* – will help to build on the interest generated.

What do you think Wizard Books' long term plans for the series may be?
I can't speak in any official capacity but I think they're hoping to bring out a couple of books a couple of times a year, with (if the demand is there) a new book once a year. But like I say, I don't know for sure.

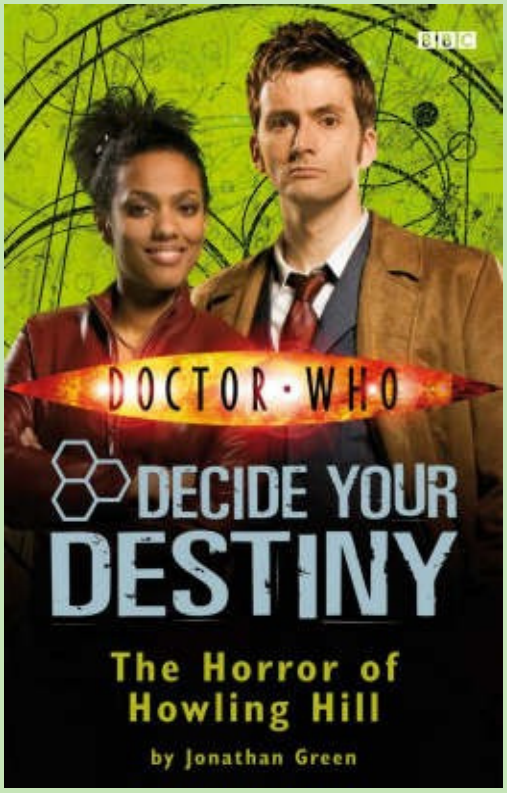
Do you think it is time for the *Fighting Fantasy* range to revisit ideas such as two-player games or multi-book adventures? If so, what would you change to make them work?
Probably not. I think they've been tried already and if they had been a success the first time round those particular approaches would have been repeated already. If any have legs, I think it's the multi-part epic, but I'm not sure what the story would be that could match the Crown of Kings plotline.

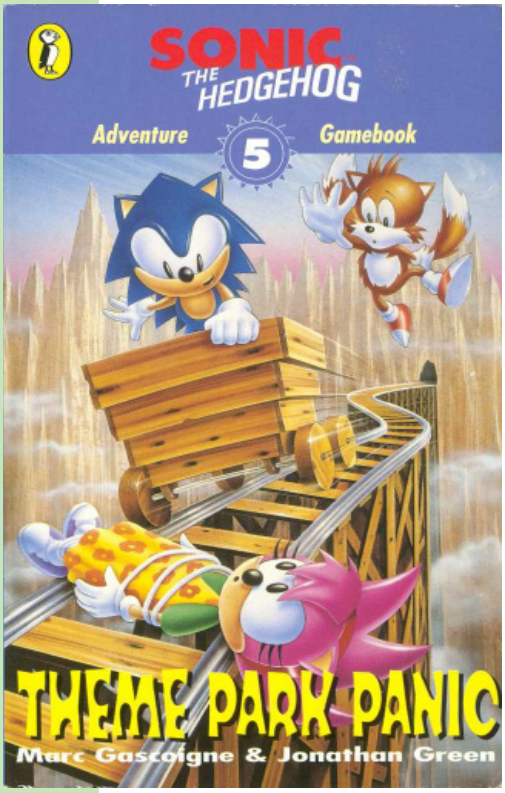
Do you think other writers may in the future provide more original titles?
I don't know. At this stage I don't even know if I'll be writing any more but – just to tease your readers – Steve Jackson has mentioned on a number of occasions that he would like to write a new *Fighting Fantasy* adventure. So, fingers crossed!

NON-*FIGHTING FANTASY* GAMEBOOKS

Sonic the Hedgehog

You co-wrote with Marc Gascoigne two Sonic gamebooks in 1995. How did this come about and were they your first non-Fighting Fantasy works?
Puffin approached Marc and I as a result of our individual work on the *Fighting Fantasy* series. However, the Sonic books weren't my first non-*Fighting Fantasy* works. By then I had





JONATHAN GREEN BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Fighting Fantasy

Puffin Books

Spellbreaker	(February 1993)
Knights of Doom	(October 1994)
Curse of the Mummy	(October 1995)

Wizard Books

Bloodbones	(September 2006)
Howl of the Werewolf	(September 2007)
Stormslayer	(coming September 2009)

Sonic the Hedgehog
Puffin Books
(with Marc Gascoigne)

Theme Park Panic	(November 1995)
Stormin' Sonic	(February 1996)

Doctor Who
BBC Books

The Horror of Howling Hill	(March 2008)

Novels
Warhammer
Black Library

The Dead and the Damned	(December 2002)
Magestorm	(February 2004)
Necromancer	(February 2005)

Warhammer 40,000
Black Library

Crusade for Armageddon	(July 2003)
Ironhands	(August 2004)
Conquest of Armageddon	(October 2005)

already started writing colour text* for Games Workshop's *Warhammer* and *Warhammer 40,000* rulebooks.

Were you a fan of Sonic, or did this require quite a bit of research?
I knew of Sonic, but not a lot more. I did some research but the way Marc and I worked together involved me structuring the adventures (having plotted them together) and Marc Sonic-fying everything in the final edit.

Did you enjoy the collaboration process or was it more of a hindrance? Would you ever try writing a *Fighting Fantasy* that way?
I enjoyed it! We had great fun coming up with all the different elements of the adventures. I then went away and wrote the books themselves by myself, but without giving them the kind of final polish I give books now, and passed them on to Marc.

I wouldn't be averse to writing a *Fighting Fantasy* book that way, except that I have so many ideas of my own already, I can't really see a situation arising where I would need to co-write one – unless Ian fancies having a go at writing *Deathtrap Dungeon 3*. After all, I've got an idea for how we could do that one too!

Compared to the *Fighting Fantasy* series, were these easier or harder to pen?
Easier, in that they were shorter and not as complex, and as a result not as satisfying.

With a much simpler game system did this require a different approach to that of *Fighting Fantasy*?
Not really, it was just that the adventures were never going to be as complex.

Did you learn anything from writing these that you've subsequently used in your later *Fighting Fantasy* gamebooks?
I don't think so. It's a long time since I wrote them but I've certainly learnt lots since.

Doctor Who

What was it like penning a gamebook for this series? Was there a set of guidelines as to what you couldn't do?
It was great to write a *Doctor Who* gamebook! There was a set of guidelines and everything I submitted – and that my editor accepted – then had to be okayed by the *Doctor Who* office in Cardiff. I actually submitted four ideas, two of which Cardiff rejected (one because it was too similar to a *Sarah Jane Adventure* that hadn't aired at the time) and two which were given the go ahead. From there, my editor had to choose one for me to write.

*Colour text is the short pieces of fiction that can be found in RPG rulebooks, that describe a character, give an idea of the character of a race or illuminate one dramatic moment of history. These pieces do not have a plot or much in the way of character development. They are just supposed to give the reader a taste of the world/race/individual concerned, adding colour to the setting. Hence the name.

Does the relative shortness of the adventure make it harder to generate a decent plot or capture the personalities of the characters?
Yes to the former, no to the latter. The nature of the books either meant that you could have a lot of wildly varying plotlines that were very short, or longer plots that didn't actually vary that much. My book ended up being of the second type.

If you have been a long-time fan of *Doctor Who*, how does it feel to have now written for two childhood favourites?
I'd never actually thought about it quite like that, but it feels great.

Are you likely to pen any further adventures or are there no further *Doctor Who* gamebooks lined up?
Everything's on hold now until BBC Children's Books editorial gets some more info on the Eleventh Doctor and his companion from Steven Moffat's production team.

You've contributed factual material to the latest annual (2010). Are we likely to see any non-gamebook fiction in the *Doctor Who* arena from you in the future such as an original novel?
Not at present, no. The stuff I've written for the annual is factual, in that it's consistent with what is already know about a fictional world.

FACTUAL MATERIAL

Go, Go Crazy for Those Bones!

For those of us without any idea as to what they are, what are Go Gos?
They're small pieces of plastic – knucklebone playing pieces, effectively – produced in bright colours with their own individual 'personalities'. They're big with primary school children in the UK, just as they were ten years ago.

Is this a reprinting of *Go-Gos are Go Go!*?
Pretty much, although the text has been fully updated for the 21st century version. There's some new stuff in there too.

What was the reasoning behind you writing this book?
Back in 1996 it was something the children I was teaching were into and earlier that year Marc Gascoigne had another book published about the POGs craze. I spotted an opportunity and went for it.

Do you have a set of Go Gos of your own, for research purposes only of course? ;-)
I don't. My son has got them all now. ;-)

Match Wits with the Kids

What was the genesis of this book?
Icon Books (Wizard Books' parent imprint) approached me, since I had worked with them already on the *Fighting Fantasy* books and they knew I had been a teacher. Something similar had been a hit in France and they wanted to

Pax Britannica
Abbadon Books
Unnatural History (February 2007)
*Leviathan Rising** (March 2008)
*Human Nature** (December 2008)
*Evolution Expects** (May 2009)
Blood Royal (coming December 2009)

Short Fiction
The Hounds of Winter
(*Inferno!* #0**, May 1997; reprinted in *Realm of Chaos* ed. Marc Gasgoigne & Andy Jones, January 2000)
Salvation
(*Inferno!* #1, July 1997; reprinted in *Into the Maelstrom* ed. Marc Gasgoigne & Andy Jones, September 1999; reprinted in *Let the Galaxy Burn* ed. Marc Gasgoigne & Christian Dunn, April 2006)
Bad Spirits
(*Inferno!* #3, November 1997; reprinted in *Status: Deadzone* ed. Marc Gasgoigne & Andy Jones, August 2000)
Dark Heart
(*Inferno!* #5, March 1998; reprinted in *Realm of Chaos* ed. Marc Gasgoigne & Andy Jones, December 1999)
The Plague Pit
(*Inferno!* #20, September 2000; reprinted in *Lords of Valour* ed. Marc Gasgoigne & Christian Dunn, June 2001)
Mama's Boys
(*Inferno!* #21, November 2000)
Boyz in the Hive
(*Inferno!* #23, March 2001)
Firestarter!
(*Inferno!* #26, September 2001; reprinted in *Crucible of War* ed. Marc Gascoigne & Christian Dunn, May 2003)
The Nagenhof Bell
(*Inferno!* #27, November 2001; reprinted in *Swords of the Empire* ed. Marc Gasgoigne & Christian Dunn, June 2004)
Bad Medicine
(*Inferno!* #29, March 2002)
Mark of the Beast
(*Inferno!* #34, January 2003; reprinted in *Way of the Dead* ed. Marc Gascoigne & Christian Dunn, July 2003)
Sanctuary
(*Inferno!* #38, September 2003)
The Hanging Tree
(*Inferno!* #42, May 2004; reprinted in *Tales from the Old World* ed. Marc Gascoigne & Christian Dunn, April 2007)
Fruiting Bodies
(published with the novel *El Sombra* by Al Ewing, June 2007)

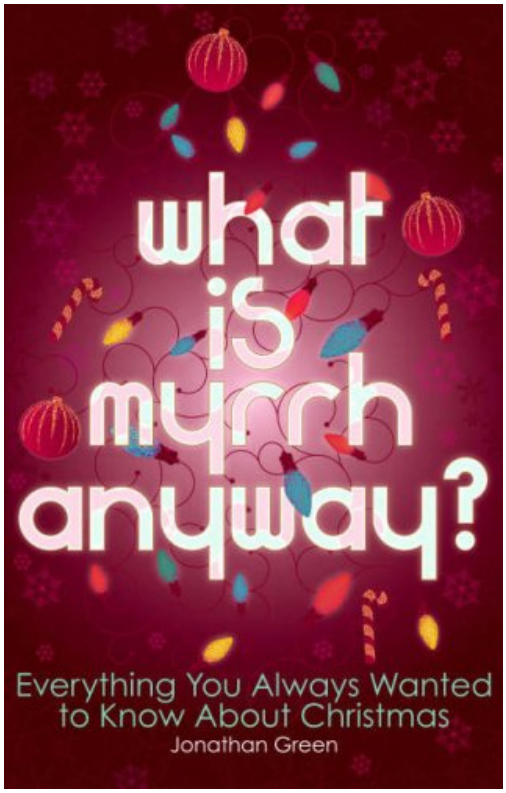
Factual Books
Go, Gos are Go Go!
(Puffin Books, January 1997; revised as *Go, Go Crazy for Those Crazy Bones!* Icon Books, August 2008)
Match Wits with the Kids: A Little Learning for All the Family
(Icon Books, June 2008)
What is Myrrh Anyway?
(Icon Books, October 2008; US title: *A Christmas Miscellany: Everything You Always Wanted to Know About Christmas*)

*Each contains an additional short story as well.
**Promotional section within *White Dwarf* magazine #210.

do an English version that was greater than the source of its inspiration. They asked if I'd like to pitch them something and it grew from there.

If you have kids of your own, how have you fared against them?
If I did Match Wits with my own kids I would win hands down, because they're four and two. Unless the questions were about *Ben 10* or *Peppa Pig* — then I'd be in trouble.

Do you find that people now try and spring surprise questions on you once they know it was you who penned this book?
It only happened the once, during a radio interview, but I managed to get away with it that time.



What is Myrrh Anyway?

Was this a natural follow up to *Match Wits with the Kids*, or did something else kick-start this one?
I'd had this idea on the back burner for a long time. With the publication of *Match Wits with the Kids* the opportunity seemed ripe to pitch *What is Myrrh Anyway?*, and it was.

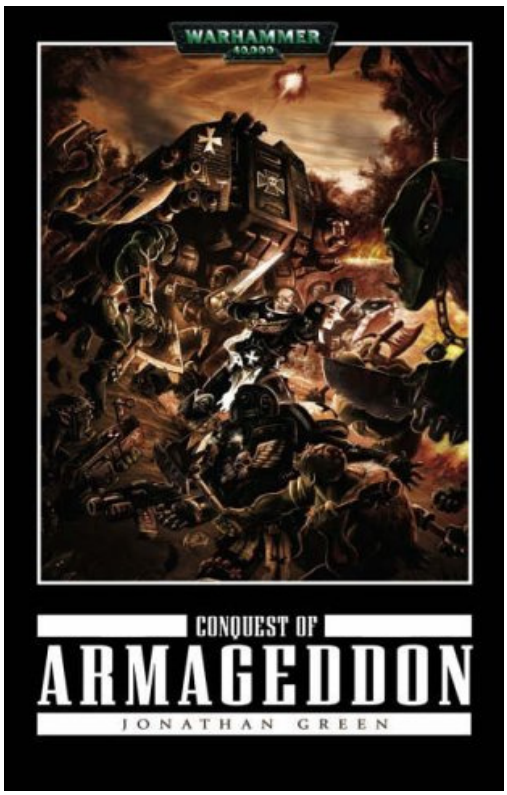
I suppose it was kick-started by my A-Level History project on the origins of the English Christmas Carol.

Was there any interesting or eyebrow raising material that didn't make the cut that you'd like to share?
Plenty, but I'm hanging onto it for the time being, in case the opportunity arises to write a sequel. However, you can read some of that sort of stuff on the book's blog at Whatismyrrh-anyway.blogspot.com.

What was the most surprising thing you learnt during your research for the book?
Goodness – where to begin? There was loads. How about that Santa Claus has an official post office in northern Finland? Or that Bethlehem is actually an Arabic word meaning 'house of bread'. Or that there is a mathematical formula you can use to work out the total number of gifts given by the 'my true love' mentioned in The Twelve Days of Christmas. I could go on...

Will there be an Easter follow up?
I pitched one, but it covered more than just Easter, but it's not been taken up yet.

Do you have any other factual books lined up for the future?
I've got a few irons in the fire and other ideas I'd like to pursue, when I've got a slot in my schedule, but nothing just at the moment.



BEAST QUEST

How did you get mixed up in this series?
I was invited by Working Partners (the book packaging company behind the series) to try out as a *Beast Quest* ghost writer.

Which titles are by yourself?
None. That probably gives you an idea as to how the try out went. I was asked to pitch for other Working Partners projects but it was either do that or write *Stormslayer*. I think you can see how that one worked out too.

Do you find yourself writing to a house style?
You have to, and that can be hard; harder than you might expect. The more established the series the harder it is. Once the tone of a series has been set you have to match it, even if that's not how you would normally write. It's also hard trying out for a brand new series as the editors have a very clear idea of what they're looking for, tempered with the fact that they don't precisely know what they're looking for until they see it. So, to sum up, writing to a house style is certainly a challenge.

WARHAMMER 40,000

What is the appeal of *Warhammer 40,000*?
This might be a strange answer, considering *Warhammer 40,000* is a science fiction setting, but its medievalism; the idea that a culture can be so technologically advanced and yet so much has been forgotten that science has acquired the status of magic again, and technology is now subject to idol-worship. It's also such a vast universe with such a detailed background, there are stories simply crying out to be told within the setting.

You got your feet wet with the short story collection *The Dead and the Damned* (2002). This was effectively your first book after the Go-Gos of 1997. How did you end up with the commission and how did it feel to be writing after such a gap?
I was writing for all of that time and I was published every year between 1997 and 2002, it's just that it wasn't books. I wrote numerous short stories, magazine articles and comic strips, all the time honing my craft.

In such a free-wheeling universe as role-playing is designed to be, how much freedom do you have as a writer to do your own thing?
The editors always went by the tenet

that you simply had to be true to their worlds and be any good. There was a great deal of freedom, as long as what you wrote didn't contradict established canon. So, you could create a whole new planet, with its own culture, factions and history, but you couldn't have the Emperor roused from his deathless sleep or the Orks destroy Holy Terra (that's Earth to you and me). I still have plenty of *Warhammer* and *Warhammer 40,000* stories that I'd like to tell, but there are only so many hours in the day/days in the week/weeks in the year... You get the idea.

PAX BRITANNIA

Could you sum up the *Pax Britannia* series for those who haven't read it?

It is the end of the 20th Century and the sun has never set on the British Empire. Queen Victoria still rules over much of the known world, as well as colonies on the Moon and the nearer planets. The Babbage engine has made all manner of scientific advances possible. People now live well beyond their god-given span of three score year and ten. Steam-powered automata labour for the good of the British people. Brave explorers have uncovered all manner of secrets and wonders within the untamed areas of the globe. Vast railways and fleets of airships have linked all corners of the globe. There are now cities on the ocean bed of this over-populated world. Even space flight has been mastered. Magna Britannia is the greatest empire the world has ever seen, bar none.

And yet all is not well within this dystopian paradise. The squabbling dynasties of central Europe are beginning to put aside their differences, siding together against the over-bearing matriarchal dominance of Britain. To solve its own population problems, China has expanded beyond the bounds of the Earth, bringing it into direct conflict with Magna Britannia's interests in the wider solar system. Closer to home, the sprawling slums of London themselves are filled with the dissolute and the destitute. Rebels and reactionaries threaten to unbalance the desperately maintained status quo, whilst an outmoded and corrupt regime, which has been slavishly maintained for over 150 years, is steadily falling apart from within. The clock is ticking as Big Ben counts down to the end of the millennium, and the end of the world.

Welcome to the world of *Pax Britannia*.

Obviously this series was planned to have several authors, but apart from Al Ewing no other writers have joined you. Why is that?

The whole *Pax Britannia* milieu was my idea and I developed it (with a little help from Andy Boot). The intention was originally that I would write one *Pax Britannia* title a year, chronicling Ulysses Quicksilver's ongoing adventures, and another writer would provide a second title. Plenty of people tried out for the series but the only one who passed muster was Al. I then made the decision to quit teaching and write full-time, and the Abaddon Books editor, Jonathan Oliver, said he'd be very happy to let me write all of the books.

It means that I have been able to develop a series of ongoing story arcs that will ultimately all contribute to one over-arching story arc, if you like. The first story arc (told over four books) is concluded in my latest book Evolution Expects, which also sets up a whole host of new plot threads that will be explored in future books.

There is also talk of increasing the number of *Pax Britannia* novels being published each year, and if this comes to pass then you can expect to see contributions from other authors again, perhaps even another Al Ewing title.

The series is obviously doing well with two titles this year and another three in the pipeline. What do you think are the attractions for the reader of the series?

The Victorian age was a time of great technological change, with dramatic advances being made across the sciences. For example, the first computer program was written at this time. It seemed like anything was possible and Britain ruled the world. I think some people like to hark back to such sentiments as are represented by this time in history. It was also the time when the first gothic horror romances were written — and a number of iconic characters created, such as Dracula and Frankenstein — which are still as popular today as they were then, if not more so. And of course there is an established history of steampunk literature, in comics and film, and so it is something people are already familiar with.

What can you tell us about your plans for future books in the series?

Well *Blood Royal* (which I am currently writing) is the first in a new planned four book story arc, which will take Ulysses off-world as well as throwing him into a full-blown war... but that's probably giving too much away already. I have further titles in mind, but I'd like to keep those under my hat for now as well, as they might be considered spoilers in and of themselves.

Do you see yourself writing for this series for some time to come or do you have a conclusion already in mind?

I do have a conclusion of sorts in mind, but it's going to take a while to get there and it won't necessarily be a permanent end. I am also considering writing some *Pax Britannia* novels focusing on characters other than Ulysses Quicksilver, which would also keep me writing for the series for significantly longer.

Part Two of this interview, covering Jonathan Green's Puffin gamebooks and getting started as a writer will appear in issue 2. In the meantime, you can check out his blogs at:
Jonathangreenauthor.blogspot.com/
and
Jongreenunnaturalhistory.blogspot.com/ **FF**

resurrection of the dead

BY ALEXANDER BALLINGALL

INTRODUCTION

Before embarking on your adventure, you must first determine your own strengths and weaknesses. You use dice to determine your initial scores. On page 15 there is an *Adventure Sheet*, which you may use to record the details of your adventure. On it you will find boxes for recording the scores of your attributes. You are advised either to record your scores on the *Adventure Sheet* in pencil or to make photocopies of the sheet for use in future adventures.

Skill, Stamina and Luck

Roll one die. Add 6 to the number rolled and enter this total in the SKILL box on the *Adventure Sheet*.

Roll two dice. Add 12 to the number rolled and enter this total in the STAMINA box.

Roll one die. Add 6 to the number and enter this total in the LUCK box.

For reasons that will be explained below all your scores will change constantly during the adventure. You must keep an accurate record of these scores, and for this reason you are advised to write small in the boxes or to keep an eraser handy. But never rub out your *Initial* scores. Although you may be awarded additional SKILL, STAMINA and LUCK points, their totals may never exceed their *Initial* scores, except on those very rare occasions when the text specifically tells you so.

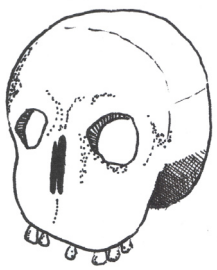
Your SKILL reflects your expertise in combat, your dexterity and agility. Your STAMINA score reflects how healthy and physically fit you are. Your LUCK score indicates how lucky you are.

Battles

During your adventure you will often encounter hostile creatures which will attack you, and you yourself may choose to draw your sword against an enemy you chance across. In some such situations you may be given special options allowing you to deal with the encounter in an unusual manner, but in most cases you will have to resolve battles as described below.

Enter your opponents SKILL and STAMINA scores on a spare sheet of paper. You should also make a note of any special abilities or instructions, which are unique to that particular opponent. Then follow this sequence:

1. Roll both dice for your opponent. Add its SKILL score to the total rolled, to find its Attack Strength.
2. Roll both dice for yourself, then add your current SKILL score to find your Attack Strength.
3. If your Attack Strength is higher than your opponent's, you have wounded it: proceed to step 4. If your opponent's Attack Strength is higher than yours, it has wounded you: proceed to step 5. If both Attack Strength totals are the same, you have avoided or parried each other's blows: start a new Attack Round from step 1 above.
4. You have wounded your opponent, so subtract 2 points from its STAMINA score. You may use LUCK here to do additional damage (see below).
5. Your opponent has wounded you, so subtract 2 points from your STAMINA score. You may use LUCK to reduce the loss of STAMINA (see below).
6. Begin the next Attack Round, starting again at step 1. This sequence continues until the STAMINA score of either you or your opponent reaches zero, which means death. If your opponent dies, you are free to continue with your adventure. If you die, your adventure ends and you must start all over again by creating a new character.



Escaping

On some pages you may be given the option of running away from a battle should things be going badly for you. However, if you do run away, your opponent automatically gets in one wound on you (subtract 2 STAMINA points) as you flee. Note

that you may use LUCK on this wound in the normal way (see below). You may only *Escape* if that option is specifically given to you on the page.

Fighting More Than One Opponent

In some situations you may find yourself facing more than one person or creature in combat. Sometimes you will treat them as a single opponent; sometimes you will be able to fight each in turn; and at other times you will have to fight them all at the same time! If they are treated as a single opponent, the combat is resolved normally. When you are instructed to fight your opponents one at a time, the combat is again resolved normally – except that once you defeat an enemy, the next steps forward to fight you! When you find yourself under attack from more than one opponent at the same time, each adversary will make a separate attack on you in the course of each Attack Round, but you can choose which one to fight. Attack your chosen target as in a normal battle. Against any additional opponents you throw for your Attack Strength in the normal way; if your Attack Strength is greater than your opponent's, in this instance you will not inflict any damage; you can regard it as if you have parried an incoming blow. If your Attack Strength is lower than your adversary's, however, you will be wounded in the normal way. Of course, you will have to settle the outcome against each additional adversary separately.

Weapons

You begin *Resurrection of the Dead* with no weapon. As with other *Fighting Fantasy* adventures, your SKILL score reflects your combat ability with a weapon. So before you start off on your adventure, deduct 3 points from your SKILL score and note this "Starting SKILL". Do not, however, change your *Initial* SKILL as this is still used to determine the maximum SKILL you have, and is also used if you must make rolls against your SKILL. If you find a weapon (which you will be told in the text if you do) during the adventure, the text will tell you how many SKILL points the weapon allows you to add. These points are added to your "Starting SKILL" and not your *Initial* SKILL.

Luck

At various times during your adventure, either in battles or when you come across other situations in which you could be either Lucky or Unlucky (details of these are given in the relevant paragraphs), you may use LUCK to make the outcome more favourable to you. But beware! Using LUCK is a risky business and, if you are Unlucky, the results could be disastrous.

resurrection of the dead adventure sheet

SKILL	STAMINA	LUCK	GOLD	PROVISIONS
INITIAL SKILL = STARTING SKILL=	INITIAL STAMINA =	INITIAL LUCK =		REMAINING

ITEMS AND EQUIPMENT CARRIED	NOTES

The procedure for *Testing your Luck* works as follows: roll two dice. If the number rolled is equal to or less than your current LUCK score, you have been Lucky and the outcome will be in your favour. If the number rolled is higher than your current LUCK score, you have been Unlucky and will be penalized.

Each time you *Test your Luck*, you must subtract 1 point from your current LUCK score. Thus you will soon realize that, the more you rely on your LUCK, the more risky this procedure will become.

Using Luck in Battles

In certain paragraphs you will be told to *Test your Luck*, and you will then find out the consequences of being Lucky or Unlucky. However, in battles, you always have the option of using your LUCK, either to inflict more serious damage on an opponent you have just wounded, or to minimize the effects of a wound you have just received.

If you have just wounded an opponent, you may *Test your Luck* as described above. If you are Lucky you have inflicted a severe wound; deduct an extra 2 points from your opponent's STAMINA score. If you are Unlucky, however, your blow only scratches your opponent; and you deduct only 1 point from your opponent's STAMINA (i.e., instead of scoring the normal 2 points of damage, you now score only 1).

Whenever you yourself are wounded in combat, you may *Test your Luck* to try to minimize the wound. If you are Lucky, your opponent's blow only grazes you; deduct only 1 point from your STAMINA. If you are Unlucky, your wound is a serious one and you must deduct 1 extra STAMINA point (i.e., deduct a total of 3 points from your own STAMINA).

Remember: you must subtract 1 point from your LUCK score each time you *Test your Luck*.

More About Your Attributes

Skill

Your SKILL score will not change much during the course of your adventure. Occasionally, a paragraph may give instructions to increase or decrease your SKILL score, but it may not exceed its *Initial* value unless you are specifically instructed to the contrary. If found, a Potion of Skill will restore your SKILL score to it *Initial* value.

At various times during your adventure, you will be told to *Test your Skill*. The procedure for this is exactly the same as that for *Testing your Luck*: roll two dice. If the number rolled is equal to or less than your current SKILL score, you have succeeded in your test and the result will go in your favour. If the number rolled is higher than your current SKILL score, you will have failed the test and will have to suffer the consequences. However, unlike *Testing your Luck*, do not subtract 1 point from your SKILL each time you *Test your Skill*.

Stamina

Your STAMINA score will change a lot during your adventure. It will drop as a result of wounds gained through combat, or by falling foul of traps and pitfalls, and it will also drop after you perform any particularly arduous task. If your STAMINA score ever falls to zero, you have been killed and should stop reading the adventure immediately. Brave adventurers who wish to pursue their quest must roll up a new character and start all over again.

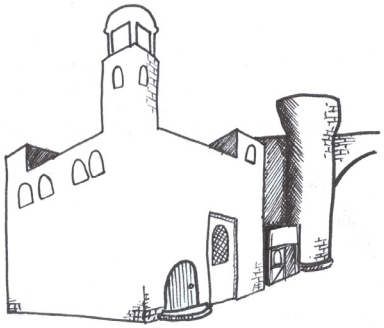
You can restore lost STAMINA by eating meals or Provisions. You start the game without any Provisions, but during your adventure you will be able to obtain meals. You must keep track of how many meals worth of Provisions you have left by filling in the details in the Provisions box of your *Adventure Sheet*. Each time you eat a meal you may restore up to 4 points of STAMINA, but you must remember to deduct 1 meal from your Provisions box. You may stop and eat Provisions at any time except when you are engaged in a battle. If found, a Potion of Strength will restore your STAMINA score to its *Initial* value.

Luck

Additions to your LUCK score may be awarded in the adventure when you have been particularly lucky or created your own luck by some action. Details are given, where appropriate, in the paragraphs of the book. Remember that, as with SKILL and STAMINA, your LUCK score may never exceed its *Initial* value except where instructed. For example, if found, a Potion of Luck will restore your LUCK score to its *Initial* value and then *add* 1 to that score.

Equipment and Gold

You begin your adventure carrying a backpack to hold your Provisions and Gold Pieces. You begin your adventure with 30 Gold Pieces, so note this total down in the Gold Pieces box on your *Adventure Sheet*. Your backpack should be noted in the Equipment box on your *Adventure Sheet*, as must any other useful items you may acquire on your quest.



TALES OF UNEASE

You've been gone from your home town of Bandur Green for a couple of months on a visit to the city of Royal Lendle. The trading you had undertaken there had been very successful and you have returned to Bandur Green ready to amaze the locals and your friends with tales of the big city and the money you have made. So it was with a light heart that you stepped into the main room of The Frantic Rat on the main road through the settlement, your tavern of choice out of the handful that dotted the town, expecting to be able to spend an easy evening in good company. The muted conversation that greeted your arrival that night and the worried, yet closed, expressions on patrons faces quickly squashed your mood.

Taking in the atmosphere of dread and the conspicuous absence of your friends, you left the tavern in search of them and some answers. Many were not at home, a good handful of the houses even boarded shut and vacant while the house of your close friend Karl seemed abandoned. It was later that winter evening that you crossed paths with another merchant you are on good terms with, Forvin Louve, and were invited back to his home to hear the news.

'Shortly after you left, the Merchants' Guild was broken into. That may not have anything to do with what I am going to explain, but it does help give us a starting point, for it was the evening after that that the first traveller passing through Bandur Green spoke of strange lights out on the heath. From then on, many travellers using the road to King's March reported seeing eerie lights at play over the old fields of battle. There was some talk of dark magic, but most of us assumed it to be nothing more than the odd Will-o'-the-Wisp that experienced travellers know to ignore.

'Then about a month ago one of the local farmers failed to return after a day out in the fields. A group of men, your friend Karl included, went out onto the heath beyond the farm in search of the man. Of the twelve, only two returned; they were found walking back to town together the following morning. One had horrific wounds to his face and body, dying of his injuries a day later, before anyone could get answers from him. The other man was Karl.'

You leant forward in your seat to hear the news about your friend.

'Karl was physically better off and still lives, yet it was his mind that was lost and not his life. The monks of the local abbey look after him now as with his distressed state he can not look after himself and can be a danger to others. His madness has kept him from being able to tell anyone what he saw out on the heath.

'After that, more people saw odd things out on the heath at night as well as haunting noises. The number of people using the road in the early evening is now almost nothing, folks keen to be indoors before nightfall rather than risk being caught alone on the road. Half of the gossip that is passed around this town on a daily basis is probably mere exaggeration, but it will all have some basis in the truth. There is something out on the moorlands. Those that can afford to, including many of your friends, have moved away to places like Fendyke or King's March in the hope that whatever plagues this town will not follow.'

Asking Forvin for his opinion on the matter, you learn that he too is troubled by what is happening and angered that Royal Lendle has not sent a garrison of men to help as requested by the town council weeks ago. He personally sets out tomorrow for the city in order to plead for intervention in the situation face to face. Thanking your fellow merchant for his time, you return home to your bed, where your servants greet you nervously. As you sink your head on your pillow your mind is brimming with ideas of what to do about the situation come morning.

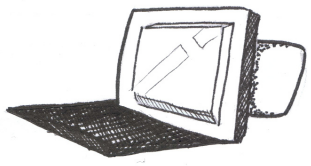
Turn to paragraph **1**.

1

The next morning dawns cold and crisp and, with a hearty breakfast from a nervous kitchen staff under your belt, you consider your options. This sort of investigative adventuring isn't something you have any recent experience with. You gave up your adventuring days to become a merchant, and your last real encounter with combat was an unarmed scuffle with a pickpocket in Royal Lendle before your hired bodyguard stepped in to deal with the issue. Here at home in Bandur Green, you don't have a bodyguard or even a weapon of your own.

After having the cook put together enough cold food for 2 Provisions and putting them into the backpack that you usually use when shopping for goods at the market, you find it is time to seek out some answers. Where will you head first to look for information as to what is happening out on the heath at night? Will you:

Return to The Frantic Rat to question the barkeep?	Turn to **107**.
Head to the abbey to see your friend Karl?	Turn to **149**.
Go in search of a blacksmith who can supply a weapon?	Turn to **74**.
Leave town to explore the heath by day?	Turn to **36**.



2

Trying to talk to the older gentleman proves a fruitless endeavour as he is several sheets into the wind and probably unable to stand. His babble of 'something in the well' you shrug off and with Barnock grinning in amusement at your predicament, will you now go home (turn to **35**), or, if you have not already done so, talk to the Dryaden (turn to **184**), or the town guard (turn to **55**)?

3

Escaping the battle and the Thieves' District you arrive back at the Royal Road and realise that there is only one thing left to do, which is to head out onto the heath in order to stop what is going on. Turn to **180**.

4

With a resounding crack the rope snaps. You plunge down into the bottom of the well, landing awkwardly on the muddy and smelly floor. Deduct 4 STAMINA points and roll one die. On an even roll you managed not to land on your sword arm, on an odd roll you land on your sword arm and must deduct 1 SKILL point. Now, turn to **77**.

5

You are shown to the office of the Abbot, a tiny room furnished with four plain chairs and a table piled with parchment. Only a short time later the Abbot joins you in his office to discuss what you have come to talk about. Have you been

to see Karl yet? If so, turn to **103**. If not, turn to **158**.

6

Venturing into this part of town is not something that your undertake lightly, especially given the edgy relationship between your two guilds. As you walk slowly up Bent Alley, it appears that none of the denizens out and about at this time take any interest in you, and with growing confidence, you turn onto Blind Alley. *Test your Luck*. If you are Lucky, turn to **67**. If you are Unlucky, turn to **129**.

7

The stack of books on the table reveals an interesting list of titles, but you hear voices in the corridor outside and have time to take only one with you. Will it be:

Darke Arts of the Mind?	Turn to **46**.
The Battle of Tanner Heath?	Turn to **73**.
The Realm of the Beyond: My Private Journey?	Turn to **126**.

8

You perform a quick search of the monk but find nothing of interest. You spend the next few moments dragging the body down a corridor in order to find a place to store it. *Test your Luck*. If you are Lucky, turn to **60**. If you are Unlucky, you are spotted by two monks while moving the body. They cry out, alerting others to your presence before attack you themselves (remember your –3 handicap if unarmed). You must fight both at once.

	SKILL	STAMINA
First MONK	6	13
Second MONK	8	15

Once you win four Attack Rounds you are forced to *Escape* (remember the penalty) and flee the abbey as reinforcements begin to arrive. Once outside and away from any observers, you catch your breath and take stock. Will you now, if you have not already done so, go in search of a blacksmith to supply you with a weapon (turn to **74**), head to the cemetery (turn to **190**), visit The Frantic Rat tavern for information (turn to **107**), or leave town to explore the heath by day (turn to **36**)? If you have already tried all of these options, you have reached the end of the day and must either drop by The Frantic Rat for a last drink (turn to **97**) or retire to your home for sleep (turn to **35**).

9

The beggar thinks hard about your request for information. 'Well,' he says at last, 'I had heard of a commotion over at the Thieves' Guild; you know, the one they think they've cleverly hidden at Porger's Corner in the Bankers' District.' Your eyes widen at that information. 'Apparently,' the beggar continues, 'someone took a job that broke some unwritten rule. Can't say anything more about the job 'cause I don't knows the facts, but the talk is that the rule breaker was thrown into a well with a Ghoul. You know the one I mean, out on the Royal Road going west to Lendle.' If this is your second question, you are interrupted by the approach of the town guards who are here to shuffle the beggars off the main road. You must now carry on to the abbey; turn to **69**. If this is only your first question, will you now pay him 1 more Gold Piece for further information about the abbey (turn to **167**), the heath

(turn to **79**), or weapons (turn to **187**), or will you head on to the abbey (turn to **69**)?

10

Stepping from the tavern, you size up the main street of the town before you. The Frantic Rat has a prime spot in the corner of Bandur Common opposite the town council buildings, and from the doorway you can see the beggars that dot the Common every day until they are shifted by the town guard. You also see a small stall set up with a handful of people watching. Few people are about despite the hour, and you reflect that perhaps many of the townsfolk no longer feel safe in the light of day. You ponder what you shall do next. Will you, if you have not already done so, go in search of a blacksmith to supply you with a weapon (turn to **74**), head to the cemetery (turn to **190**), visit Karl at the abbey (turn to **149**), go over to the small stall (turn to **101**), or leave town to explore the heath by day (turn to **36**)? If you have already tried all of these options, you have reached the end of the day and must either drop by The Frantic Rat for a last drink, turn to **97**, or retire to your home for sleep, turn to **35**.

11

Heading east, you reach the bodies of the slain goats. Here you can, if you have not already done so, head north (turn to **185**), or head right back down the path and go to the battle site (turn to **131**). If neither of these options appeal, you can return to Bandur Green to follow up other avenues of investigation by going, if you have not already done so, in search of

a blacksmith to supply you with a weapon (turn to **74**), to the cemetery (turn to **190**), to The Frantic Rat tavern for information (turn to **107**), or to visit Karl at the abbey (turn to **149**) If you have already tried all of these options, you have reached the end of the day and must either drop by The Frantic Rat for a last drink (turn to **97**), or retire to your home for sleep (turn to **35**).

12

You try and flatter Orgriff by explaining that the Thieves' Guild would obviously have the equipment and skills to aid in the successful completion of your self-imposed quest to discover the truth about the events out on the heath. Orgriff, however, looks like he has sucked on a lemon. 'Stop selling such offal, merchant, for I am in no mood to buy,' he scowls. With the flick of his hand, two of his larger "helpers" approach you and escort you off the premises. Will you now, if you have not already done so, go in search of a blacksmith to supply you with a weapon (turn to **74**), head to the cemetery (turn to **190**), visit The Frantic Rat tavern for information (turn to **107**), or leave town to explore the heath by day (turn to **36**)? If you have already tried all of these options, you have reached the end of the day and must either drop by The Frantic Rat for a last drink (turn to **97**), or retire to your home for sleep (turn to **35**).

13

Are you in need of being cured of a rotting disease? If so, turn to the paragraph number that matches the potential healer's address. If you don't know the address or are not infected, will you now, if you have not already done so, go in search of a blacksmith to supply you with a weapon (turn to **74**), head to the abbey to see Karl (turn to **149**), visit The Frantic Rat tavern for information (turn to **107**), or leave town to explore the heath by day (turn to **36**)? If you have already tried all of these options, you have reached the end of the day and must either drop by The Frantic Rat for a last drink (turn to **97**), or retire to your home for sleep (turn to **35**).

14

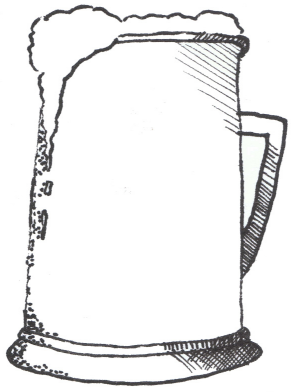
You arrive at the old battlefield in the dark, the moon just a waning silvery disc often obscured by clouds. However, you are not the only inhabitants of the battlefield at this time of night. Rising up and moving towards you at your entrance are two Crypt Stalkers, obviously posted here to keep unwanted visitors away. If you are without a weapon, you will have to fight with a –3 SKILL penalty. Do you have a vial of Holy water? If so, you may throw it at one of the advancing Crypt Stalkers and roll one die for damage (deduct the rolled amount from the STAMINA score of *one* of the Crypt Stalkers). Either way, the battle must then commence – you must fight both creatures at once.

	SKILL	STAMINA
First CRYPT STALKER	8	6
Second CRYPT STALKER	9	8

If one of the Crypt Stalkers scores two successful hits in a row it will grab you about the neck (roll one die for additional damage to your STAMINA score). Each round after this you must either win the round and free yourself or roll again for further damage. If you win, you press on towards the far side of the battlefield where you observe a strange green glow. Turn to **140**.

15

You scout around to the side of the area to find a safer way in when you observe a humanoid figure flanked by two larger creatures entering the area from the depths of the heath. The figure enters the construct in the centre of the area, and his two bodyguards stand outside. You have a feeling that this is who you are looking for. You carefully ease you way down the side of the slope till you are on level ground, some fifty metres from the huts but obscured by shadow. You will have to make a run for the building and hope that you are not spotted. *Test your Luck*. If you are Lucky, turn to **88**. If you are Unlucky, turn to **96**.



16

You spend some time crossing and recrossing the battlefield, and occasionally you spot what might be the broken pieces of weapons or shields, even armour. Then you spot a huddled shape on the edge of the field. Turning to investigate, you find that you have disturbed a Zombie munching on the body of a crow it has caught as food. When it sees you it sees a potential feast and, dropping the dead bird, it throws itself at you in attack. Remember your –3 SKILL handicap if you are without a weapon.

ZOMBIE SKILL 6 STAMINA 6

If you win, a search of the rotting corpse reveals nothing of interest beyond the fact that it is wearing pieces of ancient Gallantarian armour. Will you now, if you have not already done so, head back to the shack to take a closer look (turn to **174**), or head back up the path to the intersection where you can take the lesser used path (turn to **80**)? If either do not appeal you can return to Bandur Green to follow up other avenues of investigation by going, if you have not already done so, in search of a blacksmith to supply you with a weapon (turn to **74**), to the cemetery (turn to **190**), to the The Frantic Rat tavern for information (turn to **107**), or to visit Karl at the abbey (turn to **149**). If you have already tried all of these options, you have reached the end of the day and must either drop by The Frantic Rat for a last drink (turn to **97**), or retire to your home for sleep (turn to **35**).

17

You pay Vannix and he departs, leaving you with a good sword as a result. (Restore your SKILL to its *Initial* level and deduct the 18 Gold Pieces.) Will you now follow Vannix to recover your money (turn to **163**), or set out for whatever awaits you on the heath (turn to **180**)?

18

You pause by the beggars assembled by the roadside. You notice much further down the street are some town guards who usually do their best to keep the beggars off the main road in order to enhance the appeal of stopping in Bandur Green. Whichever beggar you pick may only have time to answer one or two questions before being moved on. Which one will you ask?

The one with no legs?	Turn to **199**.
The one with a missing right hand?	Turn to **111**.
The one with no teeth and an eye patch?	Turn to **47**.

19

'Can't stand 'em at all, with all their dos and don'ts. And I swear that those robes they wear must itch like hell, they must. The whole abbey needs tearing down if you ask me. There's some right queer things going on at that place when they think no one is looking. Why, once in the early morning before dawn, with me own eyes, I saw three of 'em monks chasing three goats with wicked looking blades in their hands. Chased it right through the street and out the east gate they did, 'eard them bleating in panic the whole way. No, I wouldn't go to the abbey even if you paid me, and I believe you had best avoid it if you can.' If this is your second question, the town guards arrive to clear the beggars off the main road. You must now carry on to the abbey; turn to **69**. If this is only your first question, will you now pay him 1 more Gold Piece for further information about the heath (turn to **104**), recent events (turn to **152**), or weapons (turn to **54**), or will you head on to the abbey (turn to **69**)?

20

You press on towards the green glow, trying hard not to draw notice to yourself. You reach a small, poorly constructed hut. It has a single doorway in, which faces the practising hordes. Will you back off and skirt the edge of the arena (turn to **98**), or attempt to enter the hut without being noticed (turn to **123**)?

21

The day drags on, and after questioning various passers by, you track down the only remaining blacksmith in Bandur Green... only you discover that, like many in the town, the blacksmith has shut up shop and moved away (lose 1 LUCK point). Frustrated and with the day drawing closer to an end, you have two options open to you; investigating the cemetery and heath at night unarmed is far too risky, and the abbey would not welcome an interruption at this time. Will you head home to sleep (turn to **35**), or will you head to The Frantic Rat to drown your frustration (turn to **97**)?

22

You complete one circuit of the area without any drama, noting the dead plants and absence of any animal or bird life on your way. Back where you started, you can now, if you have not already done so, investigate the disturbed soil (turn to **186**), look for tracks (turn to **120**), or head back down the path to the east (turn to **11**).

23

The spell leaves you a little muddled in the head. For the first four rounds of combat, deduct 3 points from your SKILL score. Turning to focus on the sorcerer, you make your attack. Turn to **159**.

24

'Took that from a gentleman keen to leave town after the recent goings on out on the heath. I can part with it for 18 Gold Pieces,' explains Vannix. Will you purchase it (turn to **145**), or look at another weapon?

The black mace.	Turn to **196**.
The rune covered sword.	Turn to **122**.
The silver knife.	Turn to **99**.

25

The corridor terminates in a plain wooden door, which you push against. It refuses to open. If you wish to try shoulder charging it down, roll two dice. If the total is equal to or less than your SKILL score you succeed in breaking the door down, turn to **59**. If it is greater you fail to open the door. Now you may try the other end of the corridor, if you have not already (turn to **144**), or leave the Guild and head out onto the heath (turn to **180**).

26

You spend some time skulking through the various corridors of the abbey in search of evidence that might link the monks to what is taking place out on the heath. Yet despite poking about in many rooms while avoiding the occasional monk

pacing the hallways, you fail to find anything that could be construed as implicating the monks. A short time later, you hear a commotion echoing about the corridors and know that the body of the dead monk has been discovered. Racing back to the ground floor, you are almost spotted several times before you find a smaller back door that opens out onto the street of Gate Run that skirts the wall of the town. Once outside and away from any observers, you catch your breath and take stock. Will you now, if you have not already done so, go in search of a blacksmith to supply you with a weapon (turn to **74**), head to the cemetery (turn to **190**), visit The Frantic Rat tavern for information (turn to **107**), or leave town to explore the heath by day (turn to **36**)? If you have already tried all of these options, you have reached the end of the day and must either drop by The Frantic Rat for a last drink (turn to **97**), or retire to your home for sleep (turn to **35**).

27

'Poor fools pray to the wrong god, you see,' begins the beggar after you ask him the question. 'As if gods of peace and justice would interfere in our mundane lives. Speaks too much of intervention, which as we all know those sort of gods don't like. Can't stand to get their metaphorical hands dirty can they? No,' he carries on as if you had answered, 'if you want a god to intervene in this world you got to choose one that doesn't mind getting stuck in. Take Decay for example, now there is a god willing to do the hard yards if you remember to pray to him.' The beggar give you a toothless grin. You ask him what that has to do with the abbey and monks themselves, and he explains that he was once a monk there. 'But when I expressed my opinion as I did just now to you, the Abbot had me thrown out. The nerve of that man!' If this is your second question, then the approach of the town guards to remove the beggars from Bandur Common ends your conversation with the beggar. You must now carry on to the abbey; turn to **69**. If this is only your first question, will you now pay him 1 more Gold Piece for further information about the heath (turn to **116**), recent events (turn to **87**), or weapons (turn to **182**), or will you head on to the abbey (turn to **69**)?

28

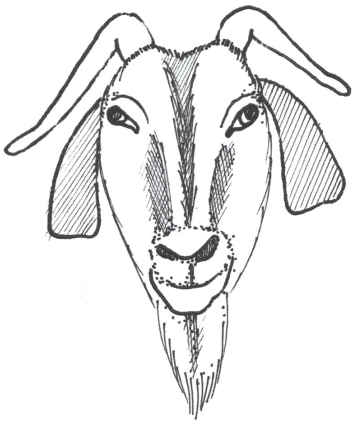
'A fine weapon,' the Abbot comments as you carefully pull your sword from the scabbard and lay it down on the desk between the two of you. The older man carefully runs his hands over the blade and pommel, pausing to look closely at the runes inscribed on the blade. 'Very fine work. Where did you say you came by this?' You desperately explain how your need for a weapon to undertake your self-imposed mission drove you to utilise a rather dodgy pawnbroker's in the Thieves' District. The Abbot nods sympathetically and asks if the pawn broker said anything about the origin of the sword. 'He did mention that it had been sold to him by a member of Narron the Steady's family who had fallen on hard times,' you say. 'Humph!' snorts the Abbot as he eases the weapon back into the scabbard. 'This is definitely the sword of Narron the Steady and was placed with his body in the family crypt. I had heard rumours of incidents at the graveyard involving various graves, but to think that someone desecrated the resting place of Narron to steal the weapon he won the Battle of Tanner Heath with is beyond belief.' After taking a moment to settle himself the Abbot waves for you to take the weapon back, which you do. 'You need to make contact with the Thieves' Guild and learn how the weapon came to be with the pawnbroker. Only their members use Vannix to off-load stolen merchandise. I have a grave feeling that whatever reason Narron's grave was disturbed is linked to what evil is growing on the heath. You need to succeed, as Bandur Green may be in grave trouble.' If you have not already done so, you may now visit Karl; turn to 78. Otherwise, you nod in agreement and stand to leave. If you do not already have one, before you leave the abbey, the Abbot presents you with an amulet of protection against the powers of the undead. You take your leave of the abbey and thank the monks on the way to the exit for looking after Karl. Stepping back out onto the Royal Road by the East Gate, you take a lungful of cool air and sigh. Will you now, if you have not already done so, head to the cemetery (turn to **190**), visit The Frantic Rat tavern for information (turn to **107**), leave town to explore the heath by day (turn to **36**), or if you know the location of the Thieves' Guild will you attempt to make contact (turn to the correct paragraph number now)? If you have already tried all of these options, you have reached the end of the day and must either drop by The Frantic Rat for a last drink (turn to **97**), or retire to your home for sleep (turn to **35**).

29

And the fight begins. (Remember your –3 SKILL penalty if unarmed.)

WIGHT	SKILL 10	STAMINA 9

For every three wounds the Wight inflicts on you, you must deduct 1 SKILL point. If you win, you return to the main chamber of the crypt; turn to **151**.

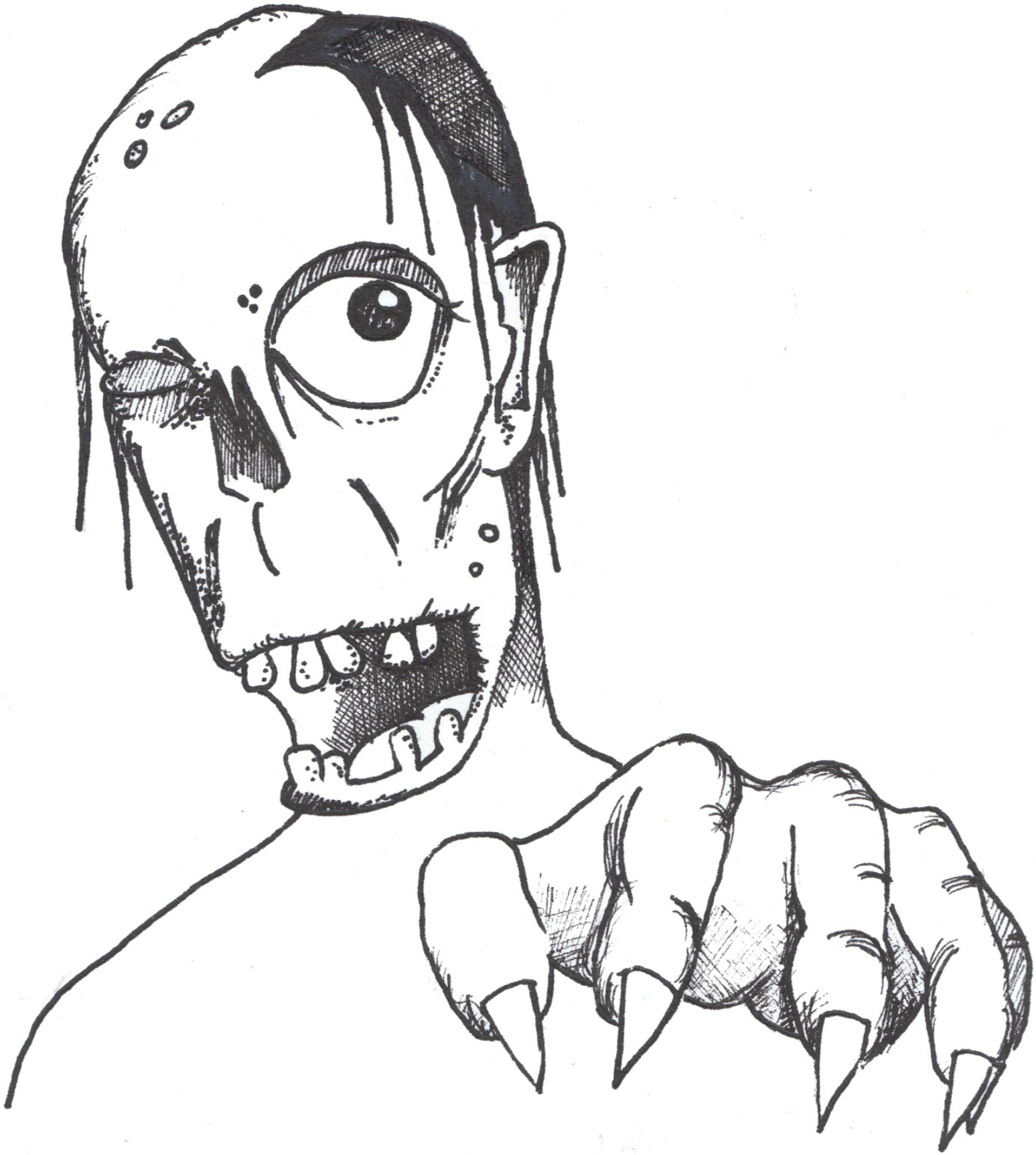


30

With the Earth Demon gone, you find little of use in the hut. Slipping out of the hut, you head in the direction of a red glow you can see in the distance, but when you reach the edge of the arena, you are confronted by several creatures. If you are unarmed, you must fight with a –3 SKILL handicap against all three creatures at once.

	SKILL	STAMINA
SKELETON	8	6
First ZOMBIE	6	6
Second ZOMBIE	6	7

Only maces and war hammers will do 2 STAMINA points damage to the Skeleton, all other weapons doing only 1 point of damage. If you defeat all three, you set off for the glowing red area of the heath. Turn to **43**.



31

You find that three Zombies are in the way of your pursuit. You must deal with them before you can get away. Remember your –3 SKILL penalty if you are unarmed and fight each in turn.

	SKILL	STAMINA
First ZOMBIE	8	6
Second ZOMBIE	6	7
Third ZOMBIE	9	5

If you win, turn to **188**.

32

Taking the knife (add it to your Equipment list and deduct 10 Gold Pieces), you leave the pawnbroker's. You are used to wielding a full length blade in battle, so the shorter dagger poses a bit of a challenge. Your SKILL score now has a deficit of –1 rather than the unarmed –3. Feeling better now that you are armed, you carry on to the abbey. Turn to **108**.

33

You mention to Vannix that you are in need of a sword, and he tells you that he can get you one. He goes on to explain that if you meet him the following morning, he can sell you a sword. When given the opportunity to meet with a contact for a weapon, add 30 to the paragraph you are on and turn to the new reference. He then gives you a piece of paper with the following note on it:

Etonen ins'xin
Naven osis ihteno

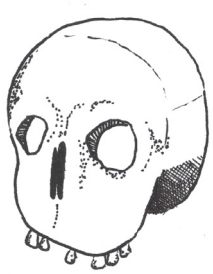
'That might prove useful if you need some equipment to help in your mission.' Thanking Vannix, you can now, if you have not already done so, talk to the older man (turn to **2**), talk to the town guard (turn to **55**), or head home to sleep (turn to **35**).

34

You haven't met the two gentlemen before, since you are a regular of The Frantic Rat in the later evening; you've never particularly enjoyed a morning round. Sitting down next to them, you ask what they know of the strange happenings of the last month or so. The two of them constantly talk across each other and argue over every statement, so they don't pass much useful information on to you, instead only confirming what Forvin has told you already. At one point the debate becomes quite loud and involves some pushing and shoving, resulting in you being accidentally struck by one of the men (lose 1 STAMINA and 1 LUCK point). A final plea for anything else prompts one of the pair, the elder of the two, to remind himself to check his wife's grave. Giving up on the conversation you can, if you have not already done so, talk to the barkeep about Karl (turn to **133**), talk to the barkeep about the latest news (turn to **85**), or leave the tavern (turn to **10**)?

35

After a night's sleep you look for breakfast only to find that your cook and the rest of your servants abandoned you and the town in fear of their lives while you spent the day investigating (lose 1 LUCK point). You spend the morning cooking and eating a breakfast before fashioning the leftovers into enough for 1 Provision (add this to your *Adventure Sheet*). If you are currently afflicted by the rotting disease of a Decayer, this would be a good time to seek out a cure. If you know of one, turn to the reference contained in the shop address. If you have some help from someone, turn now to the paragraph referencing that help. If you are still weaponless, you need to head out onto the town now to try and find one; turn to **76**. If you do not have the means or wish to use any of these options, you can collect together your equipment and head out onto the heath to end the problems once and for all. Turn to **180**.



36

Following Vulcan Lane as it heads north-west through the town to the North Gate you muse on the great battle Narron the Steady won against the forces of the Northlands on the heath. Passing the gate and the guards who stand nervously on duty there, you find yourself in the wide open space of the heath. Taking a cleansing breath of deep, fresh air you shake yourself loose and began walking along the narrow trail that winds through the heath in the direction of the battle site. Eventually the path appears to split. You can carry on along the more well-defined trail to the battle site (turn to **131**), or you can investigate the less used path (turn to **80**).

37

The east wing is eerily quiet, the number of monks you have to avoid dwindling to almost nothing. You try many doors, only to find storerooms or currently unoccupied meditation chambers. Eventually you reach the end of the wing and one final door. You push it open, expecting to find it as empty as all the others. Instead, it opens on a room with a simple table, chair, and bed. A figure lies prone on the bed, asleep. Rising from the chair is a monk who has realised that you are not a fellow brother of the abbey. He snatches up a small bell from the table and begins ringing it before throwing himself at you, leaving you with no choice but to fight (remember your –3 handicap if you are without a weapon).

MONK SKILL 9 STAMINA 13

If you win, you turn to see that the sleeping figure has awoken and sat up, revealing himself to be your friend Karl. Before you can say anything to him, his eyes widen in fear or surprise, and he begin screaming loud and piercingly. With no choice left to you, you are forced to flee the room and the east wing, running in search of an exit. *Test your Luck*. If you are Lucky, turn to **109**. If you are unlucky, you are soon swarmed by more monks than you could possibly ever fight. You are unable to call for peace, especially when the monks learn of the discovery of two dead bodies. As an invader of the abbey, you are dealt with swiftly, ending your adventure here.

38

Striding out across the heath at night has gotten you thoroughly lost and put you in the way of a Soulsucker that is on the prowl. Remember your –3 SKILL penalty if you are still without a weapon.

SOULSUCKER SKILL 7 STAMINA 10

If you win, you are still lost. Roll one die to find out where you end up. A roll of 1 or 2, turn to **65**. A roll of 3 or 4, turn to **114**. A roll of 5 or 6, turn to **140**.

39

You explain that your investigations so far suggest that the town council has proven ineffective in doing anything to identify the problem on the heath in order to remedy it. Orgriff considers this and eventually explains that his own Guild has done some little investigative work of their own, uncovering so far just one thing – a name: Dar'noth. You thank Orgriff for the scrap of information, and the meeting comes to an end. You are escorted to the door and shown out on to the corner of Lucre Alley and Weir Corridor. Will you now, if you have not already done so, go in search of a blacksmith to supply you with a weapon (turn to **74**), head to the cemetery (turn to **190**), visit The Frantic Rat tavern for information (turn to **107**), or leave town to explore the heath by day (turn to **36**)? If you have already tried all of these options, you have reached the end of the day and must either drop by The Frantic Rat for a last drink (turn to **97**), or retire to your home for sleep (turn to **35**).

40

Lifting the ladle full of stew to your lips, you eat some of the stew. A minute or so later, you know that this was a bad idea, as your stomach begins to cramp badly. You rush out of the shack and begin heaving, emptying the contents of your stomach out onto the plants covering the heath (lose 4 STAMINA points). Obviously, that stew has been sitting there for some time. Eventually you stop retching and get your breathing under control. Will you now, if you have not already done so, poke about in the cloaks and rags (turn to **62**), head out to the battlefield to take a closer look around (turn to **16**), or head back up the path to the intersection where you can take the lesser used path (turn to **80**)? If none of these options appeal, you can return to Bandur Green to follow up other avenues of investigation by going, if you have not already done so, in search of a blacksmith to supply you with a weapon (turn to **74**), to the cemetery (turn to **190**), to the The Frantic Rat tavern for information (turn to **107**), or to visit Karl at the abbey (turn to **149**). If you have already tried all of these options, you have reached the end of the day and must either drop by The Frantic Rat for a last drink (turn to **97**), or retire to your home for sleep (turn to **35**).

41

Roll two dice. If the total is equal to or less than your SKILL score, the dagger slams into his chest and causes him pain. Deduct 4 STAMINA points from his STAMINA score when you engage him in combat If the total is greater than your SKILL score, the dagger misses and clatters to a stop somewhere out in the darkened heath. Turn to **148**.

42

With care, you extract yourself from the tight entrance to the tunnel, which must have been an old underground river at some point; your exit is simply an area where the ground has caved in slightly. You see that you are a mere one hundred and fifty metres from the well on the other side of the road, but the effort has cost you. Deduct 3 STAMINA points. You have spent some time underground, and the day has moved on. You must now eat. If you have Provisions, you will have to eat 1 now (deduct it from your *Adventure Sheet* but do not add any STAMINA points). If you do not have any Provisions, you will have to deduct a further 2 STAMINA points. Brushing the mud from your grubby tunic, will you now, if you have not already done so, go in search of a blacksmith to supply you with a weapon (turn to **74**), head to the cemetery (turn to **190**), visit The Frantic Rat tavern for information (turn to **107**), or leave town to explore the heath by day (turn to **36**)? If you have already tried all of these options, you have reached the end of the day and must either drop by The Frantic Rat for a last drink (turn to **97**), or retire to your home for sleep (turn to **35**).

43

Crossing the heath at such a time of night is fairly treacherous going, even with the red glow on the horizon to guide you. Roll one die to determine the number of times you stumble and fall as you scramble about in the dark. For every fall, roll another die. Halve the number rolled and round up to determine the amount of STAMINA lost with each fall. After the mad crossing you near the red glow and see a similar set-up to the arena, except there are several ramshackle huts in a circle in the middle of the area with a lone hut in the centre of that circle. Two large humanoid figures stand on guard outside this central hut, making you suspect that it contains what you are looking for. You carefully ease your way down the side of the slope till you are on level ground, some fifty metres from the huts but obscured by shadow. You will have to make a run for the building and hope that you are not spotted. *Test your Luck*. If you are Lucky, turn to **88**. If you are Unlucky, turn to **96**.

44

The Tanner family mausoleum is a large, tired looking structure, yet it has been kept neat and tidy by the family who are still influential in the Mongers' District to this day. You spend time exploring it and noting the names of those interred there, but find nothing that leaps out at you as being of particular interest. Will you now, if you have not already

done so, visit the Potters' Field (turn to **89**), look through the Stable family crypt (turn to **151**), explore the headstones (turn to **112**), or leave the cemetery (turn to **13**).

45

You are able to defeat the curse, but you know that you cannot wield it in battle around such evil, as it will surely attempt to poison your mind again. You throw the mace aside and move to confront Dar'noth without it. Turn to **155**.

46

With the sound of voices in the corridor, you snatch up the book (add it to your *Adventure Sheet*) and escape from the library before you are found. You are almost spotted several times before you find a smaller back door that opens out onto the street of Gate Run that skirts the wall of the town. Once outside and away from any observers, you catch your breath and take stock. Finding an alcove in a doorway sheltered eyes, you settle down with the book and begin to flick through the pages. The book by Farroon Manador is a detailed explanation of the various type of mind arts created over the centuries. It is a rather dense and difficult tome, with much of the minutiae of the arts beyond your comprehension. You do take from one passage the knowledge that the majority of mind arts can be overcome by the use of an amulet or item of magical clothing designed to protect against such things. Will you now, if you have not already done so, go in search of a blacksmith to supply you with a weapon (turn to **74**), head to the cemetery (turn to **190**), visit The Frantic Rat tavern for information (turn to **107**), or leave town to explore the heath by day (turn to **36**)? If you have already tried all of these options, you have reached the end of the day and must either drop by The Frantic Rat for a last drink (turn to **97**), or retire to your home for sleep (turn to **35**).

47

You approach the beggar with the patch over his eye and press 2 Gold Pieces into his hands, telling him that you would like some information. What will you ask him about?

The abbey?	Turn to **27**.
Weapons?	Turn to **182**.
The heath?	Turn to **116**.
Local goings on?	Turn to **87**.

48

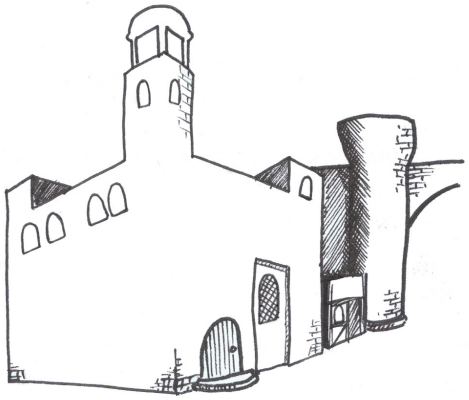
You show Orgriff and the Abbot the notebook you discovered, and they pore over the tiny writing. Orgriff crows in surprise and excitement when he recognises it as one of the many thieves' codes used to pass messages along without discovery of their contents. He points to a last handful of entries, presumably made before the death of the unfortunate owner of the notebook, which detail what the writer had discovered about the events on the heath. 'It fits with the name we have been hearing this last week,' agrees the Abbot, who directs Orgriff to explain it to you. 'We were hearing the name Dar'noth, whom we have since learnt is a powerful sorcerer from the Northlands who was ejected from their lands for his necromantic practises. In the last few years, he has been a bitter and vengeful man wandering the four kingdoms searching for a means of exacting revenge. According to this account, he is using a ring to bring the dead of the battlefield back to life as a means of forging an army to lay waste to the Northlands. If he did so, no doubt that Gallantaria would be dragged into the war for not stopping him, and the Treaty that Tantalon essentially gave his life to fashion would be undone. The four kingdoms would be at war once more.'

Do you have the ring from the dead thief? If so, turn to **92**. If not, turn to **132**.

49

A visual examination of the corpse reveals an ornate ring on the female thief's right hand, but when your fingers graze it in order to remove it, the ring glows green briefly, and the eyes of the corpse flick open. You fall backwards in surprise and shock, staring at the body as it turns its head this way and that. 'Am I dead?' queries the corpse in dull tones as it pokes and probes the mess the Ghoul has made of its chest. At first, you can't even formulate a reply, eventually resorting to nodding. 'Ah, then it was the ring,' the dead thief says as she hold the hand with the ring up in front of her face.

You ask for clarification, now sure that she will not immediately attack you, and she explains that she had taken it from a sorcerer she had encountered out on the fields of battle on Tanner Heath while returning home from King's March. 'I did a job for him some months ago where I violated the Thieves' Guild rules by breaking into the headquarters of another Guild. He knew that somewhere in there were some very old papers dating back to the War of the Four Kingdoms, papers that would lead him to what he was after. I found the information and passed it on to him. I'm ashamed to say that together we broke into the family crypt of Narron the Steady, where we found the ring. I took other items and trinkets which I pawned off.

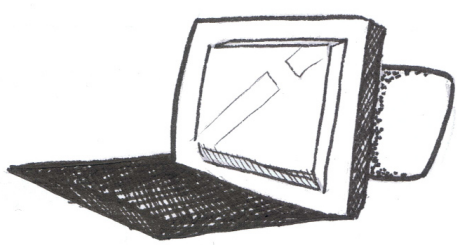


'When I began hearing tales of strange things out on the heath, I was worried and hid myself for some time till I learnt of the missing farmer and that man who came back insane. I knew then I had to do something, that this sorcerer was involved. So I tracked him down on the heath once more and watched him. He was using this ring to bring the bodies of the dead from the battle back to life. In an unguarded moment one evening, I slipped past his undead bodyguards and stole the ring while he slept. I planned on explaining everything to the town council so they could do something to stop him, only the Thieves' Guild caught up with me first for the rule breaking and threw me down here.'

After a pause, she stiffly pulls the ring off her finger and blandly states that by wearing it, she must have been brought to life. She passes it to you (add it to your Equipment box) and charges you with keeping it from the sorcerer, as well as

finding a means of defeating him and his army of undead. She tells you that she also stole a gem belonging to the sorcerer that seemed important to him and that she hid it in Narron's grave. Add 30 to the paragraph you are on when you believe you are in the right location to find this gem and turn to the new reference. Then she asks you to end the parody of existence that she now possesses. Reluctantly you must attempt to end her undead life.

If you have a rune covered sword, you are able to end her life with dignity, her body slumping against the wall – truly dead. If you have a regular sword or other weapon, these prove ineffective against the undead thief. If you are unarmed, there is no way to end such torment. In these last two cases, you apologise to the thief for being unable to help her and must lose 2 LUCK points. She is doomed to replace the Ghoul that was feeding on her before at the bottom of the well. Either way, you must press on with your mission. Will you now, if you have not already done so, search the well (turn to **191**), look in the small knapsack (turn to **136**), use the passageway to escape the well (turn to **105**), or use a rope, if you have one, to try and climb back out the way you came (turn to **83**)?



50

With elation, you snatch the ring safely up off the ground and secure it in a pocket of your tunic. With a howl of frustration, Dar'noth the sorcerer backs up and prepares to fight. Turn to **53**.

51

Pushing open the door with some force, you enter a smaller and darker room which appears to be the resting place of members of the Stable family who died in childhood. Then a shuffling sound reaches your ears, and from the gloom lurches a Wight. Do you have an amulet of protection from the undead? If so, turn to **160**. If not, you are forced to fight it. If you have a silver weapon, turn to **29**. If not, turn to **90**.

52

Apart form some mild discomfort which quickly passes, the Fluxweed succeeds in ridding you of the rotting disease of the Decayer. Also, thankfully, none of those in the arena appear to have noticed what was going on. Then, off to one side of the arena, you spot a dark robed figure stalk off to the west with two other figures as bodyguards. You decide to shadow this figure. Turn to **137**.

53

You advance on the sorcerer, ready to do battle out on the heath like the hero Narron the Steady of ages past. Turn to **127**.

54

'Not having much luck acquiring a weapon,' you say.

'Well you asked the right man, because I happen to know that Marrick the Dwarf, even though he has turned into an artist, does have an unused sword left over from his blacksmith days. His small gallery of artworks can be found in the Monger's Ward, number 117 Bellows March.' You thank the beggar for this information. If this is your second question, the beggars are forced to leave the area by the town guards. You must now carry on to the abbey; turn to **69**. If this is only your first question, will you now pay him 1 more Gold Piece for further information about the abbey (turn to **19**), recent events (turn to **152**), or the heath (turn to **104**), or will you head on to the abbey (turn to **69**)?

55

The town guard requires more persuasion to begin talking of anything of interest and you will have to spend freely to loosen his tongue. If you can afford 4 Gold Pieces, pay this (deduct from your *Adventure Sheet*) and turn to **193**. If can you not, or will not pay this amount, will you now, if you have no already done so, talk to the older man in his cups (turn to **2**) talk to the Dryaden (turn to **184**), or head home for the night (turn to **35**).

56

You greet Barnock the barkeep, with whom you have a cordial relationship, and he returns with a gruff hello and a wry smile as he straightens things up behind the bar. You wave off any interest in a jug of your favourite ale. Will you instead:

Ask him about the latest news?	Turn to **85**.
Ask him about Karl?	Turn to **133**.
Talk to the two elderly gentlemen at one of the tables?	Turn to **34**.

57

The monk lets you speak for some time about your enthusiasm for joining their order, but at the end of your spiel, the monk states plainly that, 'Your energy is hollow. Do not waste our time with such transparent falsehoods, merchant. Peddle your act elsewhere, for you are not wanted here. Now leave!' Will you attack the monk in order to gain entry (turn to **102**), or accept that you will not gain entry and, if you have not already done so, look for information at The Frantic Rat (turn to **107**), investigate the cemetery (turn to **190**), go in search of a blacksmith (turn to **74**), or leave town to explore the heath by day (turn to **36**). If you have already tried all of these options, you have reached the end of the day and must either drop by The Frantic Rat for a last drink (turn to **97**), or retire to your home for sleep (turn to **35**).

58

The body of Dar'noth the sorcerer falls to the ground, his evil force finally spent. Returning to one of the battle camps after resting and restoring yourself as best can be done, you acquire the material needed to fashion a crude stretcher with which to drag the body back to Bandur Green. As you failed to destroy the ring used to bring the dead back, the dead that Dar'noth resurrected, including your poor friend Karl, will not find peace any time soon, and the force of soldiers from Royal Lendle that arrive that morning will have the task of keeping the now master-less undead from causing too much havoc in the region. If you had the ring, you pass it to the Abbot of the local abbey who hopes that with some study

another means of destroying the ring can be found in order to put the restless souls of the reanimated dead put to rest. Still, you have done the region a great favour, and without Dar'noth to rock the boat, Gallantaria–Northlands relations should remain cordial. At the very least, you will be lauded as a hero at your local watering hole, where a much deserved drink awaits!

59

The door caves in to reveal a storeroom filled with all manner of items stacked on shelves, piled on the floor, or hanging on the walls. You can take three items from the following list with you.

A bag of pungent herbs.
A piece of chalk.
A Potion of Fortune.
A set of earmuffs.
A silver dagger.
A vial of Holy Water.
A war hammer.

Once you have made your choices, you can either try the other end of the corridor if you have not already done so (turn to **144**) or leave the Guild and set out for the heath and whatever lies beyond (turn to **180**).

60

You find a place for the body and deposit it before making quickly away from the location. The abbey is large, and you'll probably have time to do only one thing. What will it be?

Search for Karl.	Turn to **141**.
Find the library and search for potentially helpful information.	Turn to **94**.
Search for evidence to link the abbey to the events of the heath.	Turn to **26**.

61

You carefully walk up the Black Narrow, where the buildings have grown up and towards each other in an attempt to create more room. This has the effect of making the corridor darker than a regular lane and much more claustrophobic. You then reach the turn onto Gutfish Alley and locate Vannix's Sticky Fingers just as the beggar told you. The store is a ramshackle wooden building with a weather-beaten sign above the door depicting a hand being severed from a wrist by a butcher's cleaver. You shudder at the message Vannix is trying to communicate and, squaring your shoulders, enter the store to purchase what will most likely be a stolen weapon.

Vannix it turns out is a rather surly looking Dryaden with pointed ears and a shaggy yet half-formed beard. He has black rings under his eyes and the left eyeball is very bloodshot. Vannix grunts in acknowledgement when he sees you and steps out from behind the counter to help. 'What can I get for you, good customer?' he enquires snidely. Ignoring his anti-merchant attitude, you explain that you require a weapon. Nodding, he brings you to a wall covered in an assortment of weapons ranging from run-of-the-mill legal to those so blatantly evil they've been banned by good society. Four items catch your eye. Which will you look at first?

A standard, yet good quality sword like you used in your adventuring days.	Turn to **24**.
A wicked looking black mace.	Turn to **196**.
A rune covered sword.	Turn to **122**.
A deadly looking silver knife.	Turn to **99**.

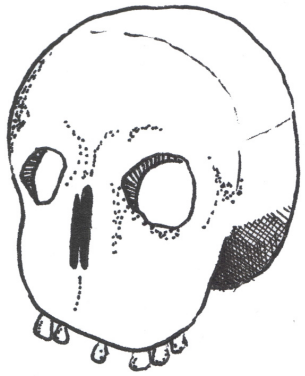
62

Disturbing the collection of cloths turns out to be a bad idea as from the cloaks and rags rise various body parts of what you would guess are the remains of the souvenir stand owner. He is now an animated Living Corpse and must be fought. Remember your –3 SKILL penalty if you are without a weapon.

LIVING CORPSE

Die Roll	Body Part	SKILL	STAMINA
1	Head	3	1
2	Body	2	1
3	Left arm	3	1
4	Right arm	3	1
5	Left leg	3	1
6	Right leg	3	1

Each part will attack with its own Attack Strength, and each roll checked against your own. For each roll that is higher than your own Attack Strength, the Living Corpse scores a hit. You however can only attack one body part at a time, determined by the die roll above. If your Attack Strength is higher than that body part, it is put out of action and will not attack again, but it will remain in the fight, so you may end up rolling that part again and wasting a blow.



If you win, the body parts fall back together to form a beaten and battered rotting corpse. With the battle out of the way you resume your search of the rags, uncovering a small notebook filled with tiny writing written in some language you do not understand, 3 Gold Pieces, and a silver dagger (this is not a practical fighting weapon and does not count as a weapon in any fights you may come across). Will you now, if you have not already done so, take a look at the pot on the stove (turn to **121**), head out to the battlefield to take a closer look around (turn to **16**), or head back up the path to the intersection where you can take the lesser used path (turn to **80**)? If none of these options appeal, you can return to Bandur Green to follow up other avenues of investigation by going, if you have not already done so, in search of a blacksmith to supply you with a weapon (turn to **74**), to the cemetery (turn to **190**), to the The Frantic Rat tavern for information (turn to **107**), or to visit Karl at the abbey (turn to **149**). If you have already tried all of these options, you have reached the end

of the day and must either drop by The Frantic Rat for a last drink (turn to **97**), or retire to your home for sleep (turn to **35**).

63

You explode out of the hut as fast as you can, weaving and dodging through the milling forms of the sorcerer's minions, who are currently without command. You catch sight of the sorcerer's cloak as he dashes out into the dark of the heath, and you rush after him. *Test your Luck*. If you are Lucky, turn to **188**. If you are Unlucky, turn to **31**.

64

When you describe the break in at the Merchants' Guild as a huge distraction that keeps your own Guild occupied with something other than the heath, Orgriff favours you with a half-amused, half-grimacing smile. 'You truly have some strange sense of humour, my friend,' he begins with a bark of a laugh. 'It was a member of our organisation who perpetrated the violation of your Guild Hall, breaking our pledge to your Guild that such a building would remain untouched by our activities. We will have much fence mending to do in the future, I'm sure. As to the thief in question, we have subtly dropped them from our organisation. Now if only we could stop the pitiful whining that can be heard from the top of the West Well, as we hardly need complaints from the town council on top of everything else.' Then, with a wave, Orgriff ends the meeting, and you are escorted to the door and out onto the street. Will you now, if you have not already done so, go in search of a blacksmith to supply you with a weapon (turn to **74**), head to the cemetery (turn to **190**), investigate the well to the west of town (turn to **125**), visit The Frantic Rat tavern for information (turn to **107**), or leave town to explore the heath by day (turn to **36**)? If you have already tried all of these options, you have reached the end of the day and must either drop by The Frantic Rat for a last drink (turn to **97**), or retire to your home for sleep (turn to **35**).

65

The trail begins to become indistinct, and you are starting to wonder just where on the heath you are, as all the landmarks have faded into the night. What moonlight there is is pale and weak, not really providing enough to navigate by. Noises and lights in the distance seem your best bet for finding what you are looking for, and you march across the uneven terrain in their direction. You move closer and can see that the area you are headed for is bathed in a strange green light, dark figures moving like tiny ants inside the glow. Drawing nearer, you are disturbed by the approach of some sentries who you will now have to fight. Remember your –3 SKILL penalty if you are without a weapon.

	SKILL	STAMINA
First SKELETON	6	5
Second SKELETON	7	8
Third SKELETON	5	7

Unless you possess a mace or a war hammer, you will only be able to do 1 STAMINA point of damage per blow landed. If you win, you move closer to the area under the green glow. Turn to **98**.

66

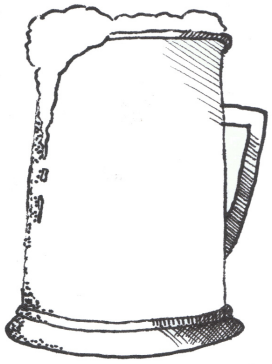
As you face off, Dar'noth attempts one last ranged attack before engaging you in battle. He casts the DUM spell. *Test your Skill*. If you succeed, you avoid the spell and rush the sorcerer to begin the combat; turn to **159**. If you fail, you are struck by the spell; turn to **23**.

67

It is as you pass the display of animal heads on spikes in the great windows of Graven's Depository, at the corner of Blind Alley and the Black Narrow, that you notice someone following through their reflection in the glass. A local thug has let you get deeper into his territory before deciding that a merchant makes an easy and potentially lucrative target. Lacking a weapon, you will have to fight unarmed (remember the –3 effect on your SKILL score).

THUG SKILL 7 STAMINA 9

If you win, turn to **172**.



68

You move quickly through the heath as the night begins to draw in, the open landscape becoming darker and more twisted in appearance as the light fails. You reach the copse containing the tree you marked when you lost the tracks you were following the day before. Now you have a last few rays of sunlight to spot new tracks leading out deeper into the heath, but know that once it is dark, you will be truly lost. If you have some sort of map as additional directions, you can attempt to follow these new tracks by doing as the map instructs. If you do not have the map, you may attempt to follow the tracks regardless (turn to **38**), or instead head to the battlefield (turn to **14**), or the northward trail that eventually reaches Fickling in the north (turn to **135**).

69

As you walk the Royal Road that runs through the centre of Bandur Green, you come to a major intersection where Bent Alley leads into the Thieves' District and Anvil Road into the Mongers' Ward. If you have business in either one of these areas of the town, turn to the number contained in the address now (you may have to read the address backwards). If you do not wish to visit either of those locations or do not have the addresses, you will carry on to the abbey; turn to **108**.

70

The weapon has picked up some of the Abbot's blessing, and when you wield it in battle against Dar'noth, you can add 1 to your Attack Strength. Turn to **66**.

71

Pulling the dead body into the shadows, you quickly frisk it in search of any items Vannix was carrying. If you did not have a sword, you take the one Vannix was going to sell you (restore your SKILL to its *Initial* level), and if you paid him the 18 Gold Pieces for a sword, you recover that instead. Digging into Vannix's clothes, you find a hidden pocket and stick your hand in only to be bitten by a Pocket Crab – a small pet guardian utilised by many to protect pockets from prying fingers. Lose 2 STAMINA points as the creature scuttles away. Inside the pocket is a note, but the writing is smeared and unreadable. With nothing else left to do, you must leave town and head out onto the heath. Turn to **180**.

72

The sorcerer pulls a Galehorn from his cloak and blows it at you. Test your Skill. If you succeed, turn to **176**. If you fail, turn to **130**.

73

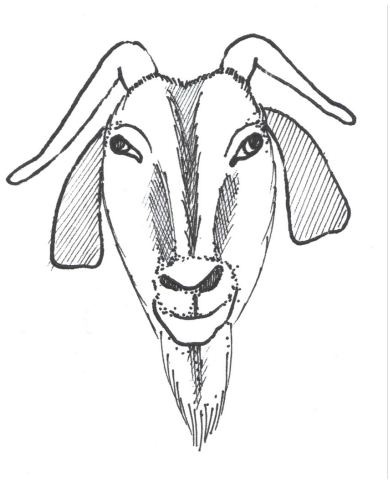
With the sound of voices in the corridor, you snatch up the book (add it to your *Adventure Sheet*) and escape from the library before you are found. You are almost spotted several times before you find a smaller back door that opens out onto the street of Gate Run that skirts the wall of the town. Once outside and away from any observers, you catch your breath and take stock. Finding an alcove in a doorway sheltered from prying eyes, you settle down with the book and begin to flick through the pages. *The Battle of Tanner Heath* by Narron the Steady is a recount of the battle that took place on the heath to the north of the town. A desperate fight towards the end of the War of the Four Kingdoms between an army of the Northlands and a matching force of Gallantarians under the command of Narron. Unlike most of the two opposing forces, Narron survived the battle, returning with what survived of his men to claim victory over the scattered forces of the remaining Northlanders. One passage catches your eye more than the others, describing the discovery of a strange ring by one of Narron's officers. Beyond that mention, however, the ring is not written of again, leaving you to wonder why it was mentioned in the first place. Will you now, if you have not already done so, go in search of a blacksmith to supply you with a weapon (turn to **74**), head to the cemetery (turn to **190**), visit The Frantic Rat tavern for information (turn to **107**), or leave town to explore the heath by day (turn to **36**)? If you have already tried all of these options, you have reached the end of the day and must either drop by The Frantic Rat for a last drink (turn to **97**), or retire to your home for sleep (turn to **35**).

74

Ambling along the narrow yet disconcertingly empty street, you leave the Merchants' Quarter where your home is. You cross the Royal Road that bisects the town in order to enter the Monger's Ward, where you should be able to locate a blacksmith and haggle over the purchase of a weapon. Yet after some time of fruitlessly searching the Ward, you pause to rest on a stack of barrels at the back of an inn. Will you now, if you have not already done so, give up and visit Karl at the abbey instead (turn to **149**), head to your local water hole The Frantic Rat to question the barkeep (turn to **107**), leave town to explore the heath by day (turn to **36**), head to the cemetery (turn to **190**), or persist in your search for a blacksmith (turn to **21**)?

75

While the mace does feel good in your hand, you are still not used to wielding such a weapon (add it to your Equipment list and deduct 15 Gold Pieces). As such, your SKILL score handicap is now –2 compared to your *Initial* SKILL score rather than the –3 of being unarmed. Leaving Vannix behind, you head for the abbey once more. Turn to **108**.



76

Do you have a contact with a potential seller of a weapon? If so, follow the instructions given for locating them now. If you have no arranged contact, you once again spend some considerable time looking for a weapon, only to come up short. If you wish to end the evil plaguing Bandur Green you will have to venture out onto the heath unarmed and pray that you survive whatever you find out there. Turn to **180**.

77

You don't have much time for your eyes to adjust to the dim light at the bottom of the well before you are attacked by a Ghoul whose meal you have interrupted. Remember to fight at a –3 penalty if you are unarmed.

GHOUL SKILL 8 STAMINA 7

As soon as the Ghoul gets in four hits, turn immediately to **194**. If you win, turn to **165**.

78

Accepting your desire to visit with Karl, a monk leads you through the abbey to where your friend is looked after. He has recently been moved to a wing isolated from the rest of the monks so that his madness does not disturb prayers or sleep. Reaching the room in which he is held, the monk raps on the door to gain entry. The door opens to reveal a sparsely furnished room where another monk sits at a small table. A single burning candle, a tiny bell, and a small prayer book rest on the desk while Karl sleeps on his plain bed. You sit yourself carefully down at the far end of the bed. 'It is best if you do not disturb him,' the monk who was already in the room explains with a furrowed brow. Ignoring the monk, you sit with your sleeping friend for some time, watching him as if the madness that has him would be obvious on his currently peaceful face.

After some time spent in silence, you take your leave of the abbey and thank those you meet on the way to the exit for

looking after Karl. Stepping back out onto the Royal Road by the East Gate you take a lungful of cool air and sigh. Will you now, if you have not already done so, go in search of a blacksmith to supply you with a weapon (turn to **74**), head to the cemetery (turn to **190**), visit The Frantic Rat tavern for information (turn to **107**), leave town to explore the heath by day (turn to **36**), or if you know the location of the Thieves' Guild will you attempt to make contact (read the note backwards and turn to the correct paragraph number now)? If you have already tried all of these options, you have reached the end of the day and must either drop by The Frantic Rat for a last drink (turn to **97**), or retire to your home for sleep (turn to **35**).

79

'Somethin' terrible has to be going on out there,' the beggar begins after pocketing the money. 'People comin' back mad as if taken by Demons. Even got one poor fellow up at the abbey. Screams day and night they say. Best if you didn't venture out at night as you may come back like him.' If this is your second question, the town guards arrive to clear the beggars off the main road. You must now carry on to the abbey; turn to **69**. If this is only your first question, will you now pay him 1 more Gold Piece for further information about the abbey (turn to **167**), recent events (turn to **9**), or weapons (turn to **187**), or will you head on to the abbey (turn to **69**)?

80

The narrow part heads roughly in a northerly direction, away from the battle site to the west of you, and you assume that this is some sort of direct route to the town of Fickling out on the coast by the Onyx Sea. You tramp through the various plants growing on the heath, almost losing the path a few times as becomes overgrown at some points. Eventually there is a split, with part of the track continuing northwards (turn to **185** to follow), and a new trail heading west (turn to **139** to take).

81

You successfully dodge out of the way of the fireball spell that the sorcerer has launched at you, but as you come up from your dive and roll, you realise that your opponent has made a quick get away. Turn to **63**.

82

The sorcerer Dar'noth gives a triumphant cry and brandishes the ring, which he puts on before you can race to stop him. You see a green glow spring to life on the sorcerer's hand and watch in horror as the bodies of the dead begin to claw their way out of the ground, clutching their ancient weapons as they emerge. Soon you are surrounded by more that you possibly ever fight, and you are slain. It does not take long for Dar'noth to resurrect you using the ring to help swell his army of the undead that will swept away Bandur Green as his first act of revenge upon the world.

83

Deftly securing the rope, you begin a slow climb out of the well. Deduct 2 STAMINA points for the effort. By the time you ease yourself over the rim of the well and back into open space, some time has passed. If you have Provisions, you will have to eat 1 now (deduct it from your *Adventure Sheet*, but do not add STAMINA points). If you do not have any Provisions, deduct a further 2 STAMINA points. Brushing the mud

from your grubby tunic and abandoning the rope, will you now, if you have not already done so, go in search of a blacksmith to supply you with a weapon (turn to **74)**, head to the cemetery (turn to **190**), visit The Frantic Rat tavern for information (turn to **107**), or leave town to explore the heath by day (turn to **36**)? If you have already tried all of these options, you have reached the end of the day and must either drop by The Frantic Rat for a last drink (turn to **97**), or retire to your home for sleep (turn to **35**).

84

You clear your throat, and the cook looks round in surprise to see you standing in the middle of his kitchen. He is so surprised that he forgets about the underling that he was berating, and the younger man ducks away with his fellow worker. 'Who might you be?' he challenges. You reply that you have come to the abbey to see Karl and, having accidentally become lost, have stopped merely to ask for directions. The cook favours you with a suspicious eye. 'Really, then you may have to convince me that what you say is the truth.' Cries of horror echo down the corridor, and you know that the body of the dead monk has been discovered. The cook snatches up a cleaver, and you know you must fight him to escape the abbey.

COOK SKILL 7 STAMINA 9

If you win, you run out the open back door and into the street. Once outside and away from any observers you catch your

breath and take stock. Will you now, if you have not already done so, go in search of a blacksmith to supply you with a weapon (turn to **74**), head to the cemetery (turn to **190**), visit The Frantic Rat tavern for information (turn to **107**), or leave town to explore the heath by day (turn to **36**)? If you have already tried all of these options, you have reached the end of the day and must either drop by The Frantic Rat for a last drink (turn to **97**), or retire to your home for sleep (turn to **35**).

85

The barkeep coughs none too convincingly, and you fish 2 Gold Pieces out of your purse. 'It's been the grim topic of conversation for weeks now,' muses Barnock as he pockets the money and talks about the strange events out on the heath. 'At first the town council thought that some gypsies had taken up residence on the heath, though others thought it were some Will o' da Wisps making a home for themselves. Then o' course that farmer went missing and in the aftermath the council sent to Royal Lendle for help to search the heath, but nothing has been forthcoming yet.'

He follows up on the main topic of discussion by mentioning that some idiots tried to defile the grave of Narron the Steady, Bandur Green's hero of the War of the Four Kingdoms and a member of the respected Stable family. 'Course, that seems to be happening at lot down at the cemetery these days. No respect for the dead anymore!' He next launches into a rambling account of the social and love lives of the more prominent members of Bandur Green society. Neither the politics nor the romances are of interest to you, and you try to wave Barnock onto other topics. He mentions that at least one of the town blacksmiths has left for the town of Hustings, and that shortly after you left, it seems that a thief broke into the Merchants' Guild council building, 'which was a bit o' a puzzler as they don't appear to have taken anything,' he concludes.

Will you, if you have not already done so, ask him about Karl now (turn to **133**), go and talk to the two older men (turn to **34**), or leave the tavern (turn to **10**)?

86

You examine the fallen Skeleton, wary of something already dead that can be reanimated. If you are without a weapon, you find that the sword wielded by the Skeleton is too rusted to be of any use to you. There are no clues on the Skeleton, but given that it thrust itself from the soil, you realise that the disturbed ground in this area indicates that many other undead creature must have emerged over the past months. The lights and sounds heard by travellers must have been the birth pangs of what could amount to an army of the undead, built from the bodies of the dead from both Gallantaria and the Northlands. Will you now, if you have not already done so, perform a circuit of the area (turn to **22**), look for tracks to follow that may lead to a culprit (turn to **120**), or retreat back down the path (turn to **11**)?

87

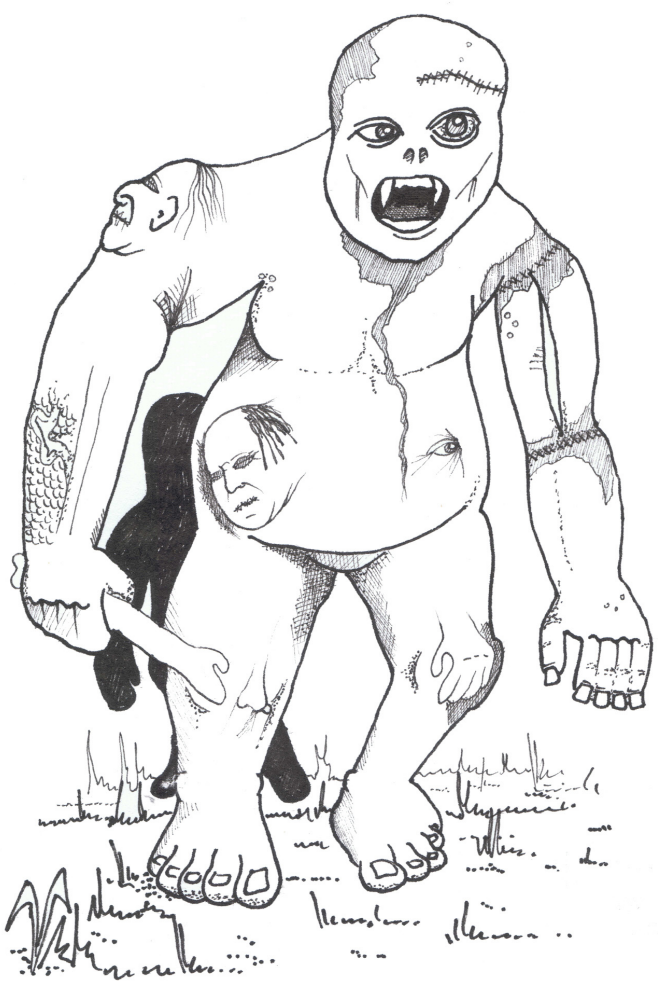
The beggar plays with his eye patch for a moment as he collects his thoughts, and you wince at a glimpse of puss escaping from under the patch. 'Recent news?' You nod at the query. 'Well, never let it be said that Ol' Toothless Joe don't know what's going on in this town!' He relates a juicy piece of gossip he only learnt a day or so ago that he is sure you would not learn from any other place. 'Apparently the break in at the Merchants' Guild was aided by a merchant, they was betrayed by one of their own!' You scowl at this, and your foul look unintentionally cows the beggar into silence. To your frustration he will say no more on the topic. He then tells you of a Decayer that has been seen stalking the Potters' Field out at the cemetery. People getting infected by its rotting disease have swelled the business of Rosie Fletcher, the local town wise woman who can make a remedy. The beggar tells you that she can be found at 147 King's West. If this is your second question, the questioning is at an end as the town guards move in to sweep the beggars out of the Common. You must now carry on to the abbey; turn to **69**. If this is only your first question, will you now pay him 1 more Gold Piece for further information about the abbey (turn to **27**), the heath (turn to **116**), or weapons (turn to **182**), or will you head on to the abbey (turn to **69**)?

88

None of the creatures in the area spot you as you dash for the central hut. Unfortunately, the two creatures on guard duty outside the hut cannot but help notice your approach, and they move in to fight. Remember your –3 SKILL penalty if unarmed. You must fight each creature in turn.

	SKILL	STAMINA
First FLESH GOLEM	8	7
Second FLESH GOLEM	10	11

If you win, you smash the flimsy door of the building down and enter. Turn to **154**.



89

Unlike the wealthier family tombs by the city wall or the stone headstones of the middle-class slightly further from the walls, the Potters' Field has no real end and simply disappears into the distance, indicating that the graves of the poor are shockingly numerous. You spend some time stalking the Field in search of inspiration, only to encounter a Decayer that is roaming the area aimlessly (remember your –3 SKILL handicap if you are unarmed).

DECAYER SKILL 7 STAMINA 5

During the battle, after every third round of combat, you must *Test your Luck*. If you are Lucky, the combat carries on as normal. If you are Unlucky, you are infected by the rotting disease Decayers are known for (deduct 2 extra STAMINA points). If you win and possess an amulet of protection from the powers of the undead, the disease will fade after the initial loss of two STAMINA points. Otherwise, from now on till such time as you find a cure or die, you must roll one die at the end of every third paragraph you turn to. An odd roll means you lose no STAMINA. An even roll results in the loss of two more STAMINA points.

If you win, you abandon your search of the Potters' Field. Will you now, if you have not already done so, explore the Tanner family mausoleum (turn to **44**), search the headstones (turn to **112**), visit the Stable family crypt (turn to **151**) or leave the cemetery (turn to **13**).

90

You have no means by which to fight off the creature as its clawed hands close around your body and strip the life from you.

91

You dash about the creature, sketching a chalk circle on the floor of the hut to hem it in. Roll one die to determine how many STAMINA points you lose from the creature's swinging claws. Once you have it held in place by the chalk circle, you are able to dispatch it easily. If you have a ring, before you kill it, you drop the ring in the creature's mouth. With the Earth Demon sent back to hell, you can turn to **30**.

92

You place the ring on a table, and the other two men gather round to look at it. You explain what it did to the dead thief, and the Abbot gasps in horror and recognition. 'This is the ring of Balmorgan, once thought lost on Tanner Heath!' he exclaims. 'Long has our order sought its destruction. The presence of this artefact in the hands of Dar'noth explains much, especially the current situation of your friend Karl. I have no doubt in my mind that your good friend is beyond saving, killed and then resurrected by this blight upon humanity. His realisation of his state of undeath was enough to drive him mad. Once the power of this ring is undone, then he shall be released from his cursed unlife.' Orgriff interrupts him to ask how it may be done, as destroying the ring will no doubt be a great boon to preventing Dar'noth's forces from growing.

'There are two ways in which it may be broken of its power. It is believed that this wretched object was the ring found by Cowyn the Traitor after the battle on Tanner's Heath. He and Narron the Steady fought over it, with Cowyn wishing to use it to force the dead of the Northlands into battle against their living brethren whilst Narron objected and had the ring hidden away till it could be destroyed. He reputedly had a warlock work many years on fashioning a gem which would contain the power to destroy the ring, only to have the ring stolen by Cowyn the Traitor and lost on the heath shortly after the gem was finished.'

Do you have the blood-red gem from Narron's grave? If so, turn to **171**. If not, the Abbot continues with the second method of the ring's destruction.

'If we had the gem, then I might be able to undo its power here and now. Without it, the ring must be lost to the pits of hell from which it can never return. For that to happen, you must place it in the mouth of a Demon before dispatching it from this plane. I am not comfortable with you carrying that ring back into Dar'noth's influence, but it must be destroyed!' You thank the two men for the information they have provided you. Turn to **132**.

93

You can feel your intestines begin to revolt almost immediately, and you clutch your sides in agony till you can feel blood beginning to leak from the corners of your eyes. Your body begins to convulse in strange contortions as you retch all over yourself, and you slump dead next to the body of the Decayer.

94

Finding the library proves easier than you had imagined it might, given the size of the abbey. You happen across a monk carrying a large tome and simply follow him back to the library. Once you observe him leaving the room on some other errand, you steal up to the door and cautiously open it to reveal a reasonably large room packed with wooden shelves against the four walls. In the centre lies a large table upon which lies a stack of books. As there is no one present, you enter and quietly close the door behind you. It is a great library, and you are unsure where to begin. Will you try the north wall (turn to **189**), the south wall (turn to **118**), or the stack of books on the table (turn to **7**)?

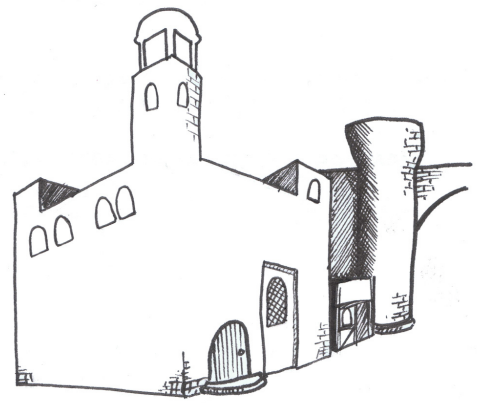
95

The often barely noticeable path suddenly broadens out into an area devoid of vegetation, forming a large, rough circle. The ground shows signs of much disturbance, and you are

getting a horrible sensation crawling up and down your spine. You are fairly sure that this place plays a part in whatever it is that is happening out here. Will you perform a circuit of the area (turn to **22**), take a closer look at the churned up soil (turn to **186**), or look for tracks to follow that may lead to a culprit (turn to **120**)?

96

Your attempt fails and draws the attentions of the entire arena. You have no hope of ever fighting off this many undead creatures, and your life ends here. The army that has slain you will soon turn on Bandur Green.



97

The Frantic Rat is just as gloomy as it was the night before when you arrived. Taking a stool at the bar after your hard day searching for clues, the barkeep Barnock places a mug of Crun Cider in front of you and relieves you of 1 Gold Piece (add a STAMINA point). If you can not pay, you will have to leave the tavern and go home to sleep for the night; turn to **35**. When you finish your drink, you size up the room. Will you go home to sleep (turn to **35**), or will you talk with one of the patrons?

The Dryaden nursing a potent brew.	Turn to **184**.
An older gentleman in his cups.	Turn to **2**.
The town guard.	Turn to **55**.

98

As you make your way around the edge of the arena, you encounter one of the undead hordes at the site. It is a Decayer. Remember your –3 SKILL handicap if you are unarmed.

DECAYER SKILL 9 STAMINA 6

During the battle, after every third round of combat, you must *Test your Luck*. If you are Lucky, the combat carries on as normal. If you are Unlucky, you are infected by the rotting disease Decayers are known for (deduct 2 extra STAMINA points). If you win and have some Essence of Fluxweed, you can attempt to eat that to see if it will cure you (turn to **150**). If you win and possess an amulet of protection from the powers of the undead, the disease will fade after the initial loss of two STAMINA points. Otherwise, from now on till such time as you find a cure or die, you must roll one die at the end of every third paragraph you turn to. An odd roll means you lose no STAMINA. An even roll results in the loss of two more STAMINA points. If you win, you turn from the fallen body to observe the arena and see if you have been spotted. Luckily, none of the creatures appear to have seen a thing. Then, off to one side of the arena, you spot a dark robed figure stalking off to the west with two other figures as bodyguards. You decide to shadow this figure. Turn to **137**.

99

Weighing the knife in your hand, you look it over under Vannix's watchful eyes. 'What do you think?' he finally asks. You shrug and make a careful stab at the air to test the thrust of the weapon. 'I carry one of those myself,' he adds, pulling his dirty cloak aside to reveal an identical blade by his hip. You are not completely skilled in using such weapons, but you can buy the knife for the price of 10 Gold Pieces (turn to **32**) or look at another weapon:

The standard sword.	Turn to **24**.
The black mace.	Turn to **196**.
The rune covered sword.	Turn to **122**.

100

Finding the kitchen is easy since you only have to follow your nose. It is towards the north-east end of the first floor, and as you slip in, you can see why. A door in the north wall is currently open, and the heat and noise of the kitchen spills out onto the street outside known as Gate Run. The kitchen is occupied by a cook and two underlings who are currently suffering under his sharply barked orders. One is cowering under a stern lecture while the other stirs a pot of stew and does his best to go unnoticed. You can take this opportunity to leave the abbey via the door. If you exit, you can then, if you have not already done so, go in search of a blacksmith to supply you with a weapon (turn to **74**), head to the cemetery (turn to **190**), visit The Frantic Rat tavern for information (turn to **107**), or leave town to explore the heath by day (turn to **36**). If you have already tried all of these options, you have reached the end of the day and must either drop by The Frantic Rat for a last drink (turn to **97**), or retire to your home for sleep (turn to **35**). If you do not wish to leave the kitchen just yet, will you examine the spread of meats, vegetables, herbs and spices (turn to **175**), or try to attract the attention of the cook to ask where Karl is (turn to **84**)?

101

The small stall turns out to be a crude game involving the betting of coin. You watch for a few rounds as one of your fellow merchants tries his luck and loses a small sum of cash. Eventually, he gives up in disgust and storms off, saying he has work – important work – to be doing rather than playing a child's game. No one else seems willing just yet to replace the merchant at the table and challenge the stall holder, an older woman, perhaps even a gypsy. Will you sit down to a game (turn to **170**), or will you, if you have not already done so, head for the cemetery (turn to **190**), the abbey (turn to **149**), or the heath (turn to **36**), or go in search of a blacksmith (turn to **74**)?

102

You leap at the monk and engage in battle (remember you –3 SKILL handicap if you are without a weapon).

MONK SKILL 6 STAMINA 13

If you win, turn to **8**.

103

'How was your friend?' the Abbot asks kindly, and you fill him in on your visit. 'It is a sad case, and seeing it brings a hard reality to the rumours we have heard. Your visit today finds us in the middle of a prayer of intercession to Usrel for peace in this region.' He shifts in his chair and fixes you with a slightly sad look. 'I spend much of my time within the abbey walls these days, so I'm not sure exactly what help I may be to you.' Do you have a rune covered sword? If so, turn to **28**. If you don't, the Abbot gives you an amulet of protection against the sinister powers of the undead (add it to your *Adventure Sheet*), explaining that he wants to do what he can to help you since you are endeavouring to put an end to whatever is going on out on the heath. Thanking the Abbot for his gift, you leave the abbey. Will you now, if you have not already done so, go in search of a blacksmith to supply you with a weapon (turn to **74**), head to the cemetery (turn to **190**), visit The Frantic Rat tavern for information (turn to **107**), or leave town to explore the heath by day (turn to **36**)? If you have already tried all of these options, you have reached the end of the day and must either drop by The Frantic Rat for a last drink (turn to **97**), or retire to your home for sleep (turn to **35**).

104

'Nothing to be found out on the heath but the trickery and treachery of gypsies,' the beggar says with a nod to the small stall off to one side of the common, where an older lady sits at a table surrounded by a small gaggle on onlookers. They are watching some sort of dice game between the old woman and one of the townsfolk. 'And that cowardly council can't even get their guard to go out and get rid of them. The sooner they're gone the better. Instead, they waste their time removing us hard working beggars from the Common every day simply because they don't like to look out their office windows in the council building and see us here plying our trade. Hypocrites, the lot of them!' If this is your second question, the town guards are indeed here to escort the beggars off the main road. You must now carry on to the abbey; turn to **69**. If this is only your first question, will you now pay him 1 more Gold Piece for further information about the abbey (turn to **19**), recent events (turn to **152**), or weapons (turn to **54**), or will you head on to the abbey (turn to **69**)?

105

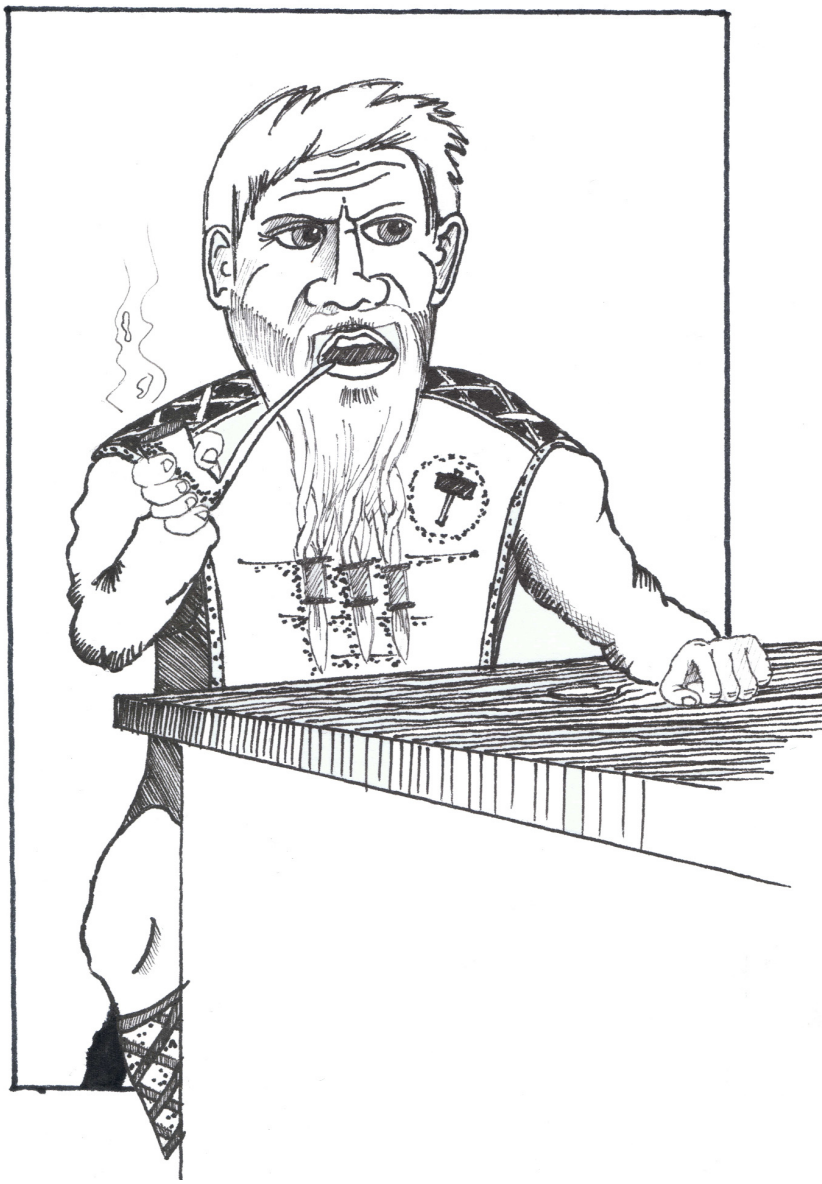
The narrow passage takes some work to get through, as you have to be careful not to cause the tunnel to collapse any further than it already has. Roll two dice. If the total is equal to or less than your SKILL score, turn to **42**. If it is greater, turn to **166**.

106

You meet Vannix at the corner of the Royal Road and Bent Alley. He flashes you a grin upon your arrival. He has a standard sword he is willing to sell to you for 18 Gold Pieces. If you have the money and wish to buy, turn to **17**. If you are too poor or don't wish to spend that much, you have to bid Vannix a farewell. Will you now follow Vannix to take the sword from him (turn to **163**), or venture out onto the heath without a weapon and hope that you survive (turn to **180**)?

107

The Frantic Rat proves to be fairly quiet at this most sensible hour of the morning. A couple of older patrons talk quietly in



one corner, nursing their drinks as they plan a day of leisure after a lifetime of hard graft out in the fields. The only other person in the tavern is the barkeep, with whom you have come to speak. Have you already gone looking for a blacksmith this morning? If so, turn to **178**. If not, turn to **56**.

108

You stride confidently to the abbey at the east end of town, the huge edifice built up against the wall of the town next to the north part of the East Gate and the Royal Road that leads out of town and on to Fendyke and Weirtown. The large stone building dwarfs everything around it, including the East Gate, the large blocks used in its construction projecting an image of strength and solidity. With a huff of expelled breath, you arrive at the large wooden door that is the main entrance to the abbey and use the brass knocker to summon someone to the door. It takes some time, but eventually a monk opens the door to politely enquire as to the reason for your visit to the abbey. Will you explain that you wish to see Karl (turn to **134**), pretend that you wish to join their order so as to gain entry to the building (turn to **57**), or request to speak with the Abbot (turn to **5**)?

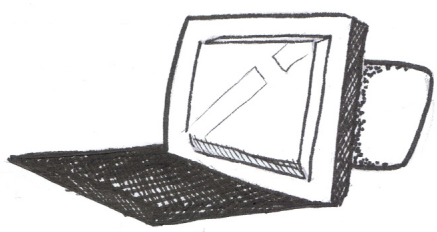
109

Racing away, you are almost spotted several times before you find a smaller back door that opens out onto the street of Gate Run that skirts the wall of the town. Once outside and away

from any observers, you catch your breath and take stock. Will you now, if you have not already done so, go in search of a blacksmith to supply you with a weapon (turn to **74**), head to the cemetery (turn to **190**), visit The Frantic Rat tavern for information (turn to **107**), or leave town to explore the heath by day (turn to **36**)? If you have already tried all of these options, you have reached the end of the day and must either drop by The Frantic Rat for a last drink (turn to **97**), or retire to your home for sleep (turn to **35**).

110

Handing over the requested amount, you take the rune covered sword (add this to your Equipment list and deduct 25 Gold Pieces) and exit the store. You can restore your SKILL to its Initial score now that you have a weapon. Feeling more secure now that you have a weapon on hand, you carry on to the abbey, turn to **108**.



111

You approach the beggar with the missing hand and press 2 Gold Pieces into his remaining hand, telling him that you would like some information. What will you ask him about?

The abbey?	Turn to **167**.
Weapons?	Turn to **187**.
The heath?	Turn to **79**.
Local goings on?	Turn to **9**.

112

Struck by their variety of shapes and sizes, you move about the large number of headstones, looking for something that will help with your mission. You come across one headstone attributed to Cowyn Thrawn, an officer of Narron the Steady's who fought with the great man at the Battle of Tanner's Heath. They apparently had a falling out over some undisclosed subject shortly after the battle was won, and their families were never on speaking terms again. Despite this noteworthy headstone, you do not find anything you feel is relevant to your mission. Will you now, if you have not already done so, look to the Potters' Field (turn to **89**), investigate the Tanner family mausoleum (turn to **44**), go to the Stable family crypt (turn to **151**), or leave the cemetery (turn to **13**)?

113

It is a long, slow climb that draws much protestation from the abused piece of rope, but the fraying bundle of twine holds for the duration of your descent, only snapping at the last moment when the bottom is within touching distance. Now, turn to **77**.

114

You stumble across the heath in the pitch blackness of the early night, fumbling for footholds in the uneven terrain. You vainly try to pick out familiar landmarks, or anything for that matter, from the solid blackness that seems to envelop you, as the clouds obscure what moonlight there is to be had. You are suddenly distracted by the flash a light off your right shoulder, and you feel you have no choice but to follow it. You find yourself unable to break your attraction to the haunting beacon, and you pursue it singlemindedly until you abruptly tumble down a steep incline to the bottom of a gully and break your neck. You have fallen victim to a genuine Will-o'-the-Wisp out on the heath. It will feast on your life force for the duration of the night.

115

The central figure of the three, which appears to a human man like yourself, merely sniffs upon seeing you and cocks his head at the two creatures to his left and right. They lumber forward to dispose of the intruder indicated by their creator. The pair are Flesh Golems, and this will prove an interesting battle: you must fight them at the same time.

	SKILL	STAMINA
First FLESH GOLEM	8	7
Second FLESH GOLEM	10	11

If you win, you realise that your enemy has made his escape. Turn to **162**.

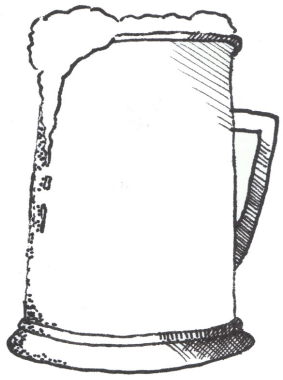
116

'I've not seen this Will-o'-the-Wisp that has the whole town up in arms. Are they safe?' You explain that they have a tendency to lead travellers to their doom. 'Well no wonder people in this town are in a panic, half of them wouldn't have enough money to buy the wit needed not to follow one to their death.' This prompts you to ask if he believes the events on the moor to be anything more sinister. The beggar shakes the head, 'People want to believe that something horrible is happening 'cause it takes all the blame for their problems off their own shoulders and puts it on something else.' You feel that you will not learn anything more on this subject. If this is your second question, the town guards swarm and remove the beggars from the road and Common. You must now carry on to the abbey; turn to **69**. If this is only your first question, will you now pay him 1 more Gold Piece for further information about the abbey (turn to **27**), recent events (turn to **87**), or weapons (turn to **182**), or will you head on to the abbey (turn to **69**)?

117

You follow the beggar's directions, turning down Anvil Road into the Monger's Ward in search of the blacksmith he described. After ducking through various alleys and narrow streets and becoming almost completely lost in the maze of corridors, you at last spy a sign above a door with the words "Marrick's Masterpieces" upon it. Pushing through the door, you find yourself in a small display room with a counter and door in one corner, the rest of the space taken up by examples of what you presume to be Marrick's works of art – great twisted objects wrought out of iron and other metals. Moving to the counter, you grab the rope marked "Pull for attention" and hear a tinny ringing sound somewhere beyond the door behind the counter. For a moment or two nothing happens, but then you hear the stumping of footsteps. The door opens, and a Dwarf enters the room, barely able to see

over his own counter. He pulls himself up on a large stool, arranges himself comfortably upon the seat, and gives you a once over with his eyes. 'May I help?' You explain the need for a weapon, and Marrick begins shaking his head. 'I gave up making weaponry quite some time ago. You should try one of the other blacksmiths in town.' You counter that there appear to be no blacksmiths in town according to what you know, and that you are in need of a weapon if you are to venture onto the heath. Marrick narrows his brow in thought for a second before declaring that he may just be able to help if you wait there. Amusing yourself by looking at the various artworks, big and small, that Marrick has made, you wait in silence till the Dwarf finally returns with something covered by a cloth. He puts it on the counter and removes the sheet to reveal a sword. 'The last weapon I made before I embraced art,' he says with a nostalgic sniffle. 'I can part with it if you are sure that you need it desperately.' You assure him that this is the case, and after much haggling, you settle on a price. The amount you will end up paying is the starting price of 23 Gold Pieces minus the sum of two dice. So a roll of a 3 and a 6 amounts to haggling 9 Gold Pieces off the starting price – a total of 14 Gold Pieces. However, a roll of 6 and 6 amounts to Marrick refusing to lower the price on such a sentimental piece of work. You will have to pay the full amount. If you are willing to pay the final agreed price, add the sword to your Equipment list and restore your SKILL score to its Initial score. You deduct the amount from your gold and then leave the store. If you are unwilling or unable to pay that amount, then you leave the store empty-handed. Either way you then carry on towards the abbey; turn to **108**.



118

The south wall titles seem to be mainly a mix of writings on the history of the region and the beliefs of the religious order itself. Your eyes skim across the many titles on offer in the hope of finding something of interest. The words *Incarnation of Evil: Balmorgan and the Ring of Unlife* capture your imagination, so you pull the tome from the shelf with some effort. Placing it on the table, you crack the book open and peer at the ancient writing, some of which is barely legible after all this time. Balmorgan, it seems, was a warlock of considerable evil who plagued the region around Bandur Green when the abbey was in its infancy and the town little more than a cluster of farming houses grouped with the abbey for protection. While forging an army, the warlock protected himself from assassination through the use of a ring that repeatedly brought him back to life without requiring pacts with Demons or other infernal creatures. Some seventy-five years before the Battle of Tanner Heath took place, a warrior found a way around such protections and slew the warlock. Somehow the ring was lost. The abbey dealt with those resurrected beings who remained after the death of the warlock, but the ring was never seen again.

With the sound of voices in the corridor, you are forced to abandon the book and escape from the library before you are found. You are almost spotted several times before you find a smaller back door that opens out onto the street of Gate Run that skirts the wall of the town. Once outside and away from any observers, you catch your breath and take stock. Will you now, if you have not already done so, go in search of a blacksmith to supply you with a weapon (turn to **74**), head to the cemetery (turn to **190**), visit The Frantic Rat tavern for information (turn to **107**), or leave town to explore the heath by day (turn to **36**)? If you have already tried all of these options, you have reached the end of the day and must either drop by The Frantic Rat for a last drink (turn to **97**), or retire to your home for sleep (turn to **35**).

119

You are directed by your information to a small shop on Narron Steet, where it meets Dunstable Lane, and you enter to discover where most of the town's thieves obtain the equipment needed to support their questionable livings. You take a wander around and several things catch your eye. Note down on your Equipment list which things you wish to purchase and deduct the amount of Gold Pieces from your *Adventure Sheet*.

Chalk	1 Gold Piece
Cheese	2 Gold Pieces
Dog Whistle	2 Gold Pieces
Essence of Fluxweed	3 Gold Pieces
Provisions	3 Gold Pieces each (max. 3)
Earmuffs	4 Gold Pieces
Vial of Holy Water	5 Gold Pieces
Warding Stone	5 Gold Pieces
Potion of Strength	7 Gold Pieces
Potion of Skill	7 Gold Pieces
Small silver dagger (not for combat)	8 Gold Pieces

Once you have made your purchases, it is time to head out onto the heath and find either death or glory. Turn to **180**.

120

You make a search of the ground for tracks and find literally hundreds of them, mostly marching off in the same direction. It is hard to tell when they were all made or even if they were made at the same time, but they are all moving off in a southwesterly direction, off the beaten path into the unforgiving wilds of the heath, away from travel routes. Will you follow the tracks (turn to **157**), or, if you have not already done so, investigate the disturbed soil (turn to **186**), or head back down the path to the east (turn to **11**)?

121

You lift the lid off the pot to find some kind of cold stew. Will you try some of the stew (turn to **40**), or replace the lid and, if you have not already done so, poke about in the cloaks and rags (turn to **62**)? Then again, you can, if you have not already done so, head out to the battlefield to take a closer look around (turn to **16**), or head back up the path to the intersection where you can take the lesser used path (turn to **80**). If

none of these options appeal, you can return to Bandur Green to follow up other avenues of investigation by going, if you have not already done so, in search of a blacksmith to supply you with a weapon (turn to **74**), to the cemetery (turn to **190**), to The Frantic Rat tavern for information (turn to **107**), or to visit Karl at the abbey (turn to **149**). If you have already tried all of these options, you have reached the end of the day and must either drop by The Frantic Rat for a last drink (turn to **97**), or retire to your home for sleep (turn to **35**).

122

The runes on the sword sparkle in the dim sunlight that penetrates the depths of the store. 'Now, that is a beauty of a piece I got off a young lady, who swears she was given it as a family heirloom,' explains Vannix. 'She said it once belonged to Narron the Steady. Had to part with it having fallen on hard times.' He clicks his tongue in mock sorrow at the unfortunate seller's predicament. 'I'm willing to consider 25 Gold Pieces for this work of art, whatever the origin,' Vannix goes on to explain. Will you pay the requested sum (turn to **110**), or look at another weapon?

The standard sword.	Turn to **24**.
The black mace.	Turn to **196**.
The silver knife.	Turn to **99**.

123

This will require some skill, but mostly a lot of luck. Test your Luck. If you are Lucky, turn to **168**. If you are Unlucky, turn to **96**.

124

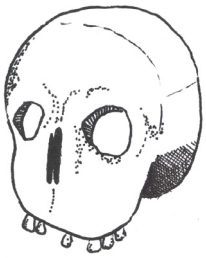
A huge fountain of froth seems to well up inside you, and as you thrash about in agony as your body thrums with pain. In your throes, you accidentally stagger down into the arena, where you are met by the welcoming embrace of the hordes of undead. Their touch will surely end your agony.

125

Passing through the West Gate, with a nod to the town guards on duty, you walk along the Royal Road till at last the well comes into sight on the north side of the road. It has been disused since the time of Narron, having dried up some years before the Battle of Tanner Heath, and it is now fair overgrown with weeds and creeping ivy. An investigation of the site shows that people have visited in the last day or two. Scuff marks on the rim of the well, which reveal unweathered stone where the top layer has been broken off, suggest something was thrown in. A straggly old rope dangles from the wooden roof of the well and may take your weight, if you wish to use it to lower yourself into the depths. Will you attempt to enter the well using the rope (turn to **192**), or, if you have not already done so, go in search of a blacksmith to supply you with a weapon (turn to **74**), head to the cemetery (turn to **190**), visit The Frantic Rat tavern for information (turn to **107**), or leave town to explore the heath by day (turn to **36**)? If you have already tried all of these options, you have reached the end of the day and must either drop by The Frantic Rat for a last drink (turn to **97**), or retire to your home for sleep (turn to **35**).

126

With the sound of voices in the corridor, you snatch up the book (add it to your *Adventure Sheet*) and escape from the library before you are found. You are almost spotted several times before you find a smaller back door that opens out onto the street of Gate Run that skirts the wall of the town. Once outside and away from any observers, you catch your breath and take stock. Finding an alcove in a doorway protected from prying eyes, you settle down with the book and begin to flick through the pages. It appears to be a diary, recounting the life after death experiences of one Wilhiem Tretthick, who was supposedly slain in battle by an enemy and subsequently resurrected from the dead to serve as the minion of an evil warlock, his first memory after resurrection being of a green glow about the warlock's hand. The resurrection, he claims, simply made him like nothing had happened, yet it did not preserve his body, which stank and decayed over the time he served the warlock. The warlock, it seems, was eventually slain, and he was essentially freed, but had nowhere to go. He was taken in by the monks of the Bandur Green abbey where he wrote this account, his death recorded in an endnote by the Abbot of the time who writes that Wilhiem eventually passed on when they severed the spiritual connection between the cursed man and the magical item that sustained him. The Abbot warns that whatever item was used to do this still exists somewhere, perhaps with the body of the slain warlock where-ever it now lies. Will you now, if you have not already done so, go in search of a blacksmith to supply you with a weapon (turn to **74**), head to the cemetery (turn to **190**), visit The Frantic Rat tavern for information (turn to **107**), or leave town to explore the heath by day (turn to **36**)? If you have already tried all of these options, you have reached the end of the day and must either drop by The Frantic Rat for a last drink (turn to **97**), or retire to your home for sleep (turn to **35**).



127

Are you fighting with a rune covered sword? If so, turn to **66**. If you instead possess a black mace, turn to **161**, or a war hammer, turn to **183**. If you fight with none of these, turn to **155**.

128

With the route of the map in your mind's eye, you tramp across the heath in almost absolute darkness, hoping that the information you obtained was correct. Eventually, you spot a dull red glow ahead that reflects off the clouds above and illuminates an area of the heath. You creep forward, keeping low to the groud in order to increase your chances of going unseen. Reaching the top of a slight rise, you lie down and pause to observe the area below. You can make out a rather inelegant wooden structure with several other outbuildings surrounding it in a circular pattern. Indistinct humanoid figures wander about the compound and from hut to hut. Will you stride boldly into the camp to do battle (turn to **198**), or attempt to find some means of sneaking into the compound (turn to **15**)?

129

You are suddenly dropped to the ground by a blow to the head from a thug who has been tailing you the length of Blind Alley (lose 2 STAMINA). Picking yourself quickly off the ground before the thug can land another undefended hit, you turn to face your attacker. As you are currently unarmed, you will have to fight with the –3 penalty on your SKILL score.

THUG SKILL 7 STAMINA 9

If you win, turn to **172**.

130

You are blown backwards off your feet by the HUF spell and the ring goes flying from your backpack to end up lying somewhere on the heath between you and the sorcerer. Lose 3 STAMINA points from the fall. Both you and the sorcerer begin scrambling for it between blows. Roll a die. If you roll a 1, 4 or 5, turn to **50**. If you roll a 2, 3 or 6, turn to **82**.

131

The paths winds on for some way across the heath till it breaks into an area of flatter land. To your right, a small wooden sign proclaims the area to be the site of the Battle of Tanner Heath, and a few feet beyond it appears to be a small wooden shack. As you approach, you see that the shack is covered in signs advertising various mementos for sale, although the place appears to be currently closed up. Will you scout the ancient battlefield (turn to **16**), or investigate the shack more closely (turn to **174**)?

132

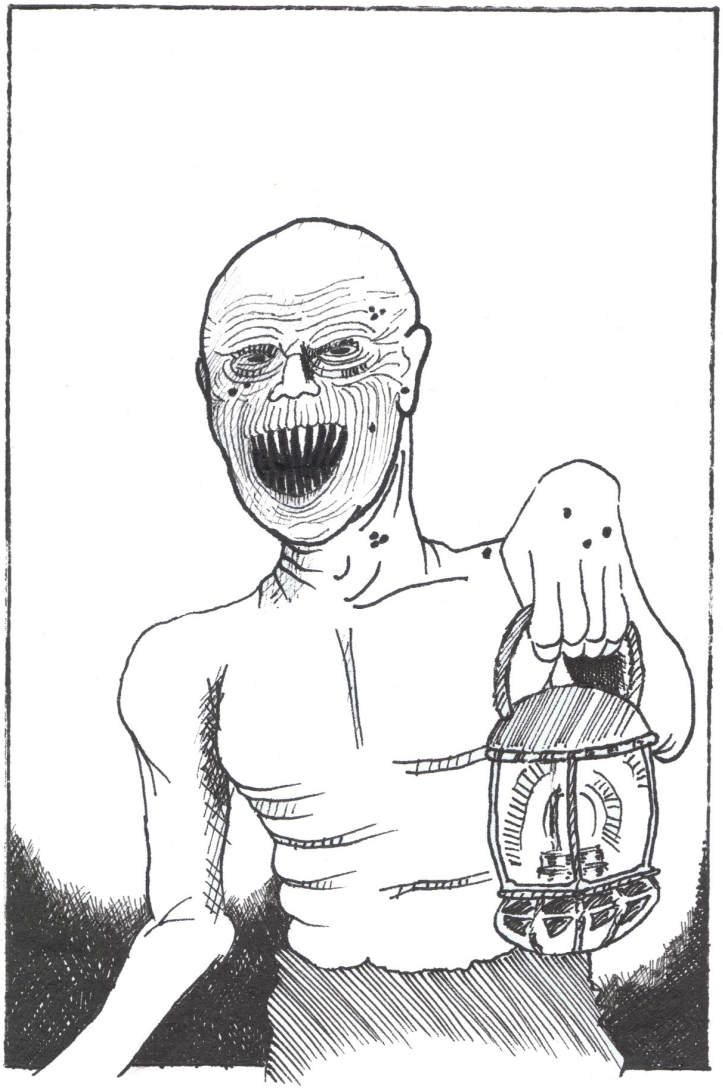
To aid you in your quest, the Abbot performs a blessing ritual. Restore all of your scores to their *Initial* levels. With that done, you thank them and take your leave, heading for the heath and battles unknown. Turn to **180**.

133

With Barnock having a hand out for money, you press 2 Gold Pieces into the palm of his hand. Once they are safely tucked away, he talks. 'Not much I can rightly say about your poor friend,' Barnock says grimly. 'I saw him when they first found him. Brought the unfortunate soul to my tavern instead of straight to the healer 'cause those who brought the two men in weren't sure what to do and wanted a pint.' The barkeep shakes his head in disbelief at the thinking processes of some people. 'So I have Karl sitting here at the bar and his incoherent babbling puts da wind up my paying customers it did! A full third of 'em up an' left there and then. I reckon the rest only stayed so they could later gossip about what they saw.'

You ask if he can tell you anything else about that day, which prompts Barnock to add that 'Karl was just sat there, jabbering away about the dead. I guess whatever he saw out there was enough to snap a man's mind. Just kept on muttering about the dead. Dead friends. Not dead friends. Some of the town guard think that perhaps some Trolls are roaming loose on the heath and killed the farmer and the search party. When no one could snap poor Karl out of his state — he was always either talking quietly to himself or screaming in horror — the monks of the local abbey offered to look after him. He's been down at the abbey ever since.'

The barkeep shrugs at the end, signalling that he has nothing more he can add on the topic. Will you now, if you have not already done so, ask about the latest news (turn to **85**), go and talk to the two older gentlemen (turn to **34**), or leave the tavern (turn to **10**)?



134

Accepting your desire to visit with Karl, the monk leads you through the abbey to where your friend is looked after. He has recently been moved to a wing isolated from the rest of the monks so that his madness does not disturb prayers or sleep. The monk tells you with a weary sigh of an occasion in which Karl escaped their watch and upset an exorcism. The expelled Demons had been transferred to three goats used in the ritual (safer than risking a nearby human host), but Karl had run in right after the transfer and accidentally released the goats. The monk and two others had to chase the Demon-possessed goats out the East Gate and slaughter them on the heath in the middle of the night! He then tells you of a Decayer that has been seen stalking the Potters' Field out at the cemetery, wondering if the two things are linked. People getting infected by its rotting disease have come to the abbey seeking aid, but the monks do not have a skilled herbalist among their number. Instead, victims are sent on to Rosie Fletcher, the local town wise woman who can make a remedy. The monk tells you that she can be found at 147 King's West.

Reaching the room in which Karl is held, the monk raps on the door to gain entry. The door opens to reveal a sparsely

furnished room. Another monk sits at a small table with a single burning candle, a tiny bell, and a small prayer book while Karl rocks quietly to himself on his plain bed.

You sit carefully down at the far end of the bed and attempt to attract Karl's attention. 'He will most likely simply start his screaming again if you disturb him,' the monk who was already in the room explains with a furrowed brow. Ignoring the monk, you try talking to the incoherent being who has replaced your friend. 'Broken gallows,' Karl gibbers brokenly, 'Death lives… ring… it's all pain. Not free. No, no, no. Karl's not free. Karl's dead.' With that proclamation, your friend breaks out into a howl. You spend some time ignoring the howls and trying to get further sense out of your friend, but you fail to make any progress. Resigning talking any further to Karl, you leave the moaning man to his torments and take your leave of the room.

Once you and your escort are on the other side of the closed door, you ask if anything can be done for Karl. The monk explains that until they can divine what is wrong with him, any random attempt to cure him could be fatal. Will you now ask to speak with the Abbot (turn to **5**), or will you leave the abbey and, if you have not already done so, search for a blacksmith (turn to **74**), search for information at The Frantic Rat (turn to **107**), visit the cemetery (turn to **190**), or explore the heath by day (turn to **36**)?

135

You follow the path in the growing twilight and soon spot a light bobbing up and down on the path several metres ahead of you. You forge on, attempting to dismiss it as a Will-o'-the-Wisp trying to tempt you to your death, only to find yourself coming upon a Night Stalker. It seems the sorcery involved out here on the heath has stirred up all manner of evil creatures. Facing off against the grey-skinned monstrosity, you must fight. Remember your –3 SKILL penalty of you are without a weapon.

NIGHT STALKER	SKILL 11	STAMINA 8

It you win, you may take its lantern to aid your path across the heath. Either way, turn to **65**.

136

Within the knapsack, you discover 1 Provision that is still edible, 3 Gold Pieces, a piece of chalk, some rope, and a note with the following written upon it:

Hparga raptah totnru
Tdnaet ons'xin navfor
Ebmune htotyt fifdda

If you understand this note, turn to the reference in question when prompted by the text. Now will you, if you have not already done so, examine the body (turn to **49**), search the well (turn to **191**), use the passageway (turn to **105**), or use the rope to climb out the way you came (turn to **83**)?

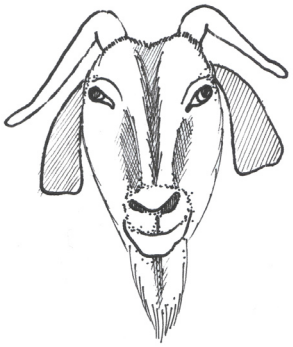
137

You follow the figure and its bodyguards across the heath till it arrives at another area, this one bathed in a red glow and with a circle of huts in the centre. In the middle of the circle is a lone hut outside of which the two bodyguards wait as the figure enters. You carefully ease your way down the side of the slope till you are on level ground, some fifty metres from the huts but obscured by shadow. You will have to make a run for the building and hope that you are not spotted. *Test your Luck*. If you are Lucky, turn to **88**. If you are Unlucky, turn to **96**.

138

Arriving at Porger's Corner, the intersection of Lucre Alley and Weir Corridor in the Bankers' District, you spot what you realise is the building that houses the Thieves' Guild — hidden in plain sight outside of the Thieves' District disguised as a bank of some kind. Summoning up your courage, you cross the street and knock on the grand door, requesting entrance. A man greets you upon opening the door and challenges you by asking for a password. You repeat back the note you found and are admitted to the building, where you are ushered into the presence of Orgriff, who cautiously welcomes you. Orgriff, it seems, is the Guild representative, and wishes to know your reasons for visiting their "banking" establishment. Hurriedly, you explain your self imposed mission to find out what has taken place out on the heath. Did the Abbot examine your sword? If so, turn to **179**. If not, continue reading. Orgriff spends some time studying you once you have finished speaking, before finally responding in turn. 'Indeed, what is taking place on the heath is a mystery to all of us. I am curious as to why you chose to visit us for help instead of, say, the council or your own guild, merchant?' What will you say:

That the council has proven ineffective?	Turn to **39**.
That the Merchants' Guild has other priorities due to a break in?	Turn to **64**.
That you are in need of what the Thieves' Guild can offer?	Turn to **12**.



139

Walking westwards, you notice three goats standing still at the top of a slight rise. You approach, thinking you can simply shoo them off and be on your way. As you draw closer, however, you notice their glowing green eyes and the blood staining their mouths and small, woolly beards. These animals are possessed by some evil force and quickly move to attack you from three sides. Remember your –3 SKILL penalty if you do not have weapon.

	SKILL	STAMINA
First POSSESSED GOAT	5	4
Second POSSESSED GOAT	3	7
Third POSSESSED GOAT	4	6

You can only fight these animals one at a time. If you wish to Escape at any time during the battle you can flee back down the path to the junction and head north (turn to **185**). If you win, you can carry on west (turn to **95**), head back to the intersection and go north (turn to **185**), or head right back down the path and go to the battle site (turn to **131**)? If none of these options appeal, you can return to Bandur Green to follow up other avenues of investigation by going, if you have not already done so, in search of a blacksmith to supply you with a weapon (turn to **74**), to the cemetery (turn to **190**), to the The Frantic Rat tavern for information (turn to **107**), or to visit Karl at the abbey (turn to **149**). If you have already tried all of these options, you have reached the end of the day and must either drop by The Frantic Rat for a last drink (turn to **97**), or retire to your home for sleep (turn to **35**).

140

The glow resolves into a flat area where hordes of undead creatures engage in mock battles in preparation of the day they will have to fight. Others are in the process of building siege engines and other weapons of war. Will you skirt the outside of the arena (turn to **98**), or move in for a closer look (turn to **20**)?

141

Searching for just one individual in this abbey proves to be some undertaking, as you have no idea where Karl might be held. You can't spend all day searching, as the body of the monk could be discovered at any moment. Will you try looking for Karl close to the kitchen (turn to **100**), the west wing (turn to **177**), or the east wing (turn to **37**)?

142

You are unable to fight off the powers of the cursed object and fall prey to its evil influences. The sorcerer Dar'noth will not mind having an underling such as yourself to aid him in the raising of an army of undead.

143

Your mind briefly informs you that you've been struck by the HOT fireball spell as you fall to the ground in pain. Lose 4 STAMINA points. When you pull yourself up, you find that your opponent has made a run for it. Turn to **63**.

144

The corridor ends in an ornate wooden door, which you open to reveal a very cosy room with a merrily crackling fireplace around which three chairs are arranged. Bookshelves line the walls, although one set of shelves contains glasses and bottles of various kinds rather than books. A couple of tables are set about the room, upon which books lie both opened and unopened. There is a door in the west wall. A voice speaks up from one of the high-backed chairs, but from this angle, you can't tell who is seated there. 'A visitor. Welcome in and have a seat.' Will you do as asked (turn to **197**), or back out of the room and try the other direction, if you haven't already, (turn to **25**) or leave the Guild and head out onto the heath (turn to **180**)?

145

Parting with your money, you feel as if you have made a sound choice (add the sword to your Equipment list and deduct 18 Gold Pieces). You secure the sword on your hip and depart the store. You can restore your SKILL to its *Initial* score now that you have a weapon you know how to use. With the task of finding yourself a weapon completed, you carry on to the abbey; turn to **108**.

146

You see a green glow spring to life on the sorcerer's hand and watch in horror as the bodies of the dead begin to claw their way out of the ground, clutching their ancient weapons as they do so. Soon you are surrounded by more that you possibly ever fight, and you are quickly slain. But it does not take long for the sorcerer Dar'noth to resurrect you using the ring to help swell his army of the undead that will sweep away Bandur Green as his first act of revenge upon the world.

147

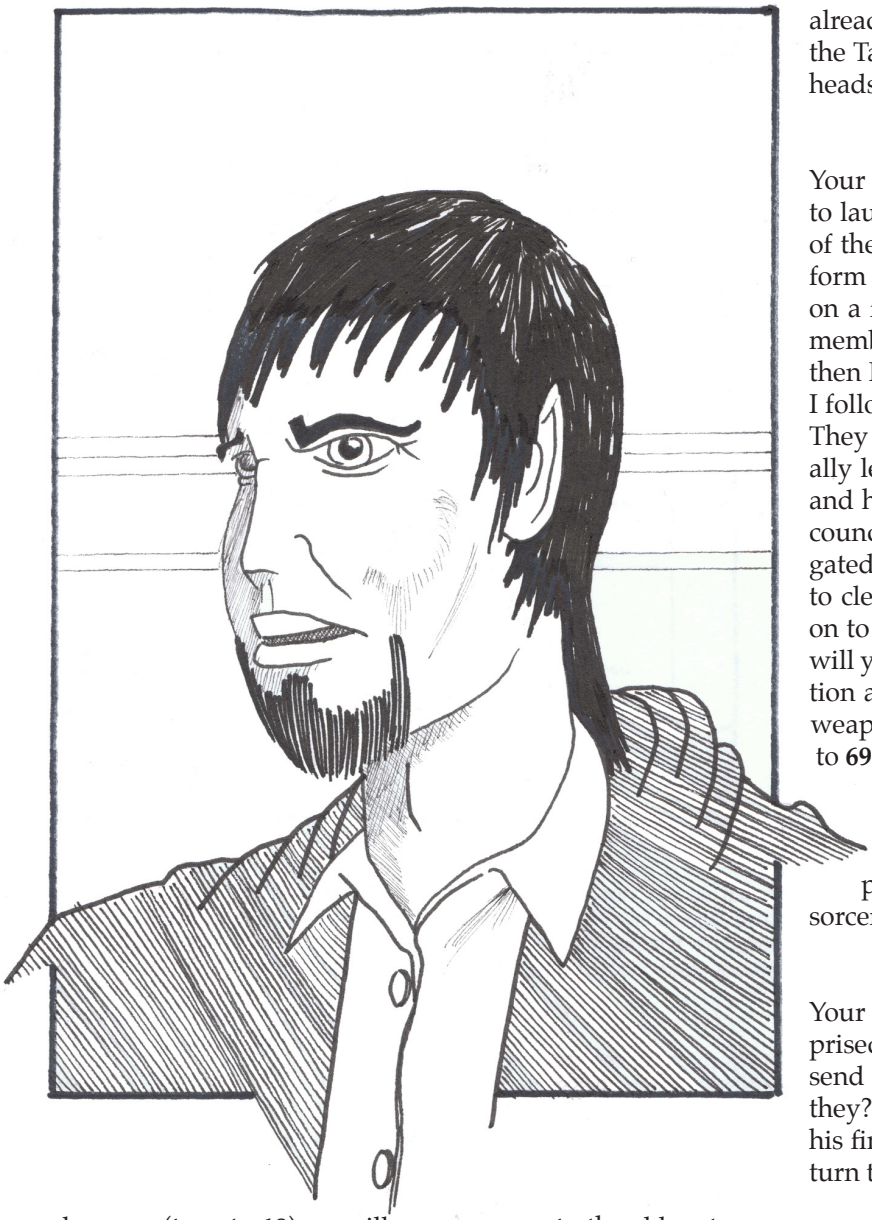
You open the door to the little shop named For What Ails You, and you are greeted by the ringing of a little bell attached to the door. Shortly afterwards, a plump older woman arrives from a back room to greet you. She takes one look at you and shakes her head sadly whilst clucking her tongue. 'Really! I've asked the town council to stop letting people near the cemetery,' she says in exasperation as she directs you to settle yourself down on a small stool. 'You're the eighth case of rotting disease I've seen in the last three days!' As you sit, she begins mixing various herbs together, using a mortar and pestle on some to grind them down to a paste. After about fifteen minutes, she pours the mixture into a mug and adds hot water from the stove. Then with a stir, she places the mug on the counter. 'That'll be 5 Gold Pieces for the cure.' Can you afford to pay? If so, you hand over the money (deduct it from your *Adventure Sheet*) and then drink the vile concoction, ridding yourself of the touch of the Decayer. If you are unable to or don't wish to pay the requested amount, you will not get the cure, although from now on, at any time you are in the town you may turn back to this reference and purchase the cure — if you are still alive, that is! Either way, you must now return to the paragraph you were previously at.

148

As you face off, Dar'noth attempts one last ranged attack before engaging you in battle. He casts the ZAP spell. *Test your Skill*. If you are successful, you avoid the spell and rush the sorcerer to begin the combat; turn to **159**. If you fail, you are struck by the spell; turn to **153**.

149

The abbey lies on the edge of town, just inside the walls. It is a huge, brooding stone building, and all who travel east towards Weirtown must pass in its shadow. As you walk along the main road through the town, you see the familiar sight of the many beggars lined up at points along the stretch of street known as Bandur Common in order to beg for alms from those passing by. Will you stop to talk with one of the



beggars (turn to **18**), or will you carry on to the abbey to see Karl (turn to **69**)?

150

You swallow the Fluxweed and hope for the best. As the plant tends to alter its chemical makeup depending on when it has been harvested, how it has been stored, how old it is, and how it is consumed, it tends not to be a very reliable ingredient in potions. Roll one die.

If you roll a 1 or a 2, turn to **124**.
If you roll a 3 or a 4, turn to **195**.
If you roll a 5, turn to **52**.
If you roll a 6, turn to **93**.

151

While not as old as the Tanner family mausoleum, the Stable family crypt is still fairly impressive. You walk down into the crypt in search of any clue that might help with your investigations of the heath. There are several rows of bodies, and you discover what appear to be the smashed remains of a stone urn that once decorated the foot of Narron the Steady's bier. With nothing else of interest to note, there appear to be two options. You can, if you have not already done so, open the door at the back of the crypt to see what is in there (turn to **51**), or you can leave the crypt and instead, if you have not already done so, go to the Potters' Field (turn to **89**), look to the Tanner family mausoleum (turn to **44**), walk through the headstones (turn to **112**), or leave the cemetery (turn to **13**).

152

Your query about any recent news of note causes the beggar to launch into a tale about his observations of two members of the town council whom he believes are involved in some form of illegal profiteering. He claims to have followed them on a few occasions and noted a meeting between them and members of the Thieves' Guild. 'If that isn't cause for alarm then I don't know what is,' he declares. 'Then just a day ago I followed them to the well out on the road to King's March. They spent some time poking around the well before eventually leaving. After they were gone I checked the well myself and heard the sound of somebody moving down there. The councillors refuse to listen when I demand they be investigated.' If this is your second question, the town guards arrive to clear the beggars off the main road. You must now carry on to the abbey; turn to **69**. If this is only your first question, will you now pay him 1 more Gold Piece for further information about the abbey (turn to **19**), the heath (turn to **104**), or weapons (turn to **54**), or will you head on to the abbey (turn to **69**)?

153

You fight the pain of the spell that causes you 4 STAMINA points of damage and struggle to your feet to defeat the sorcerer once and for all. Turn to **159**.

154

Your arrival catches the sorcerer off guard, and he is surprised to see you. 'So the spineless cretins of Casper finally send a pathetic assassin to finish me off once and for all do they?' he snarls as he leaps from his rickety chair and flashes his fingers towards you. *Test Your Skill*. If you are successful, turn to **81**. If you fail, turn to **143**.

155

Without a magic weapon, it is going to prove difficult to defeat this sorcerer, given the tricks he is likely to use to safeguard himself against ordinary attacks. If you have a vial of Holy Water, you may attempt to throw that at him; turn to **173**. If you have a silver dagger, you can attempt to throw it at him; turn to **41**. If you possess a Dog Whistle, you can try blowing that; turn to **164**. If you have none of these, or do not wish to try and use them, you will have to fight Dar'noth with skill alone. Turn to **148**.

156

'Oh, it's you,' Vannix groans, before taking a large swig of his drink. 'I hope you're not looking for a refund, 'cause I don't do refunds.' You indicate that you are happy with your weapon and ask if he knows anything about events on the heath that might help you. He tells you that word has reached him that a group of travellers taking a less known route from Fickling spotted a camp out on the heath with large numbers of people. They didn't get too close and so saw nothing of detail. On a crude map drawn onto the tavern tabletop with his knife, Vannix gives you directions to the supposed camp site. Should you have the chance to explore the heath, when you have a chance to follow some tracks add 60 to the paragraph you are on at the time and turn to the new reference. He then gives you a piece of paper with the following note on it:

Etonen ins'xin
Naven osis ihteno

'That might prove useful if you need some equipment to help in your mission.' Thanking the Dryaden, you leave him to his drink. Will you now, if you have not already done so, talk to the older man (turn to **2**), talk to the town guard (turn to **55**), or head home to sleep for the rest of the evening (turn to **35**)?

157

You follow the tracks but eventually lose them at a small copse of trees. If you have a sharp weapon, you may carve a marking on one of the trees to mark the extent of your search. With no more tracks to follow, you will have to return to the clearing and, if you have not done so already, make a circuit of the area (turn to **22**), investigate the disturbed soil (turn to **186**), or head back down the path to the east (turn to **11**)?

158

'He is in a grievous state, my friend. We do not know yet what has stolen his mind, but every day we search our archives of arcane knowledge as well as consulting various members of our brotherhood who have some connection with the larger universe. I can not make promises; it may been that your friend is never restored to his right mind. However, we will persevere in the hope that one day we may prevail.'

The Abbot takes a moment to compose himself and sighs. 'It seems we live in dark times. Even relatively isolated within these walls, we have heard about the strange events of the heath; how can we not with your friend living among us? Beyond looking after your friend I am not sure that there is much I can do to help you.' Do you have a rune covered sword? If so, turn to **28**. If you don't, the Abbot gives you an amulet of protection against the sinister spiritual powers of the undead (add it to your *Adventure Sheet*), explaining that he wants to do what he can to help you since you are endeavouring to put an end to whatever is going on out on the heath. Thanking the Abbot for his gift, will you now visit Karl (turn to **78**), or, if you have not already done so, leave the abbey go in search of a blacksmith to supply you with a weapon (turn to **74**), head to the cemetery (turn to **190**), visit The Frantic Rat tavern for information (turn to **107**), or leave town to explore the heath by day (turn to **36**)?

159

Resolve the battle. Remember to apply a –3 penalty if you are without a weapon.

DAR'NOTH SKILL 11 STAMINA 19

Did you destroy the ring? If you did and you win, turn to **200**. If you did not destroy the ring, but win, turn to **58**.

160

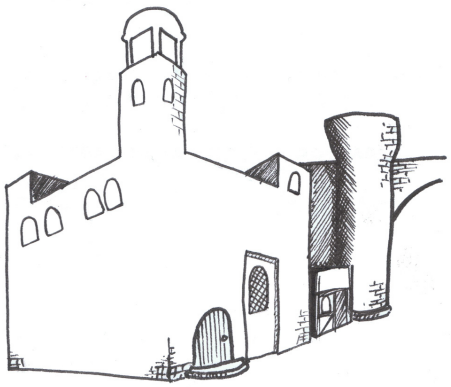
The undead creature recoils from you and backs into the corner of the room. If you possess a silver weapon you may fight it (turn to **29**). If not, you exit the room; turn to **151**.

161

The mace is actually cursed, and in the presence of Dar'noth's evil and the surrounding undead energy, the curse of the mace attempts to take hold of your mind. Roll two dice. If the total is equal to or less than your SKILL score, turn to 45. If it is greater than your SKILL score turn to 142.

162

You catch up with the sorcerer out on the heath, under the pale moonlight and somewhere between his two camps of undead minions. 'So, it's a fight you want you, is it? Casper will burn when I am done with you and this pathetic corner of the world!' The sorcerer throws a stream of lighting at you from his hands, which you are forced to dodge. Do you still have the ring of the dead thief? If so, turn to **72**. If you destroyed the ring, turn to **127**. If you never found a ring, turn to **146**.



163

As inconspicuously as you can, you follow Vannix as he turns off Bent Alley into Blind Alley, a long, narrow street that terminates right against the north-east city wall deep in the Thieves' District. As he then steps into the Black Narrow, you take your chance to attack with no witnesses. Test your Luck. If you are Lucky, Vannix didn't notice you on his tail and you get in an early strike (deduct 2 STAMINA from his stats below). If you are Unlucky, Vannix isn't as surprised by your attack as you had hoped and is able to easily fend off your opening blow. If you are unarmed, remember your –3 SKILL handicap.

VANNIX SKILL 10 STAMINA 15

It you wish to *Escape* at any point, turn to **3**. If you win, turn to **71**.

164

Dar'noth gives you a very odd look as you raise the Dog Whistle to your lips and blow. For a moment, you expect to hear something even though you know that perhaps you shouldn't. Nothing appears to happen, so you will have to engage Dar'noth one on one. Turn to **148**.

165

Turning from the fallen body of the Ghoul, you look to see where it came from. You stagger back in horror when you spot the body it was feasting on lying slumped against the wall of the empty well, next to a knapsack and a narrow passageway that heads off into the darkness. The torso has been ripped open by the undead creature, but the shreds of clothing that remain suggest that this was once a thief. Will you investigate the body (turn to **49**), look in the knapsack (turn to **136**), search the well (turn to **191**), or use the passageway to escape the well (turn to **105**)?

166

You are unable to avoid disturbing the precariously piled debris, and one accidental shove whilst navigating your way causes a cave in which claims your life.

167

'A quiet bunch, keep to themselves mostly. But they do put on a good hot, free lunch every Seaday. Seem nice enough and haven't heard a bad word spoken of them either. Sorry I can't tell you more, but religion and myself aren't getting on too well these days.' If this is your second question, the town guards appear to remove the beggars from the main road. You must now carry on to the abbey; turn to **69**. If this is only your first question, will you now pay him 1 more Gold Piece for further information about recent events (turn to **9**), the heath (turn to **75**), or weapons (turn to **187**), or will you head on to the abbey (turn to **69**)?

168

You enter the hut and discover to your horror that it contains a recently summoned Earth Demon. Do you have a piece of chalk? If so, turn to **91**. If not, you will have to fight the creature within the confines of the hut (a temporary deduction of 1 SKILL point on your count). Remember your –3 SKILL penalty on top of that if you are unarmed!

EARTH DEMON SKILL 12 STAMINA 15

If you possess a ring and wish to destroy it, you may forego defending for one Attack Round to attempt to throw it into the mouth of the Demon (remember to record the damage to your STAMINA). Determine this by rolling two dice. If the total is equal to or less than your SKILL score, you have successfully thrown the ring into the mouth of the creature which has swallowed it. Continue the battle till the Demon is defeated. If the total is greater than your SKILL score, you miss and must retrieve the ring (in the next Attack Round you may defend but not attack). You can reattempt the throw as long as both you and the Demon are alive. If you win, turn to **30**.

169

Thanks to the information you have gathered, you are able to make use of the hidden private entrance to the Thieves' Guild. Slipping inside, you find yourself in a corridor facing the choice of left or right. Which will it be?

Left.	Turn to **144**.
Right.	Turn to **25**.

170

The older woman explains the rules of the small game to you. They seem simple enough to understand. The game involves both of you staking money on the outcome of a roll of a die. You may play up to five rounds of this game, at a maximum bet of 3 Gold Pieces each round. Each round you play, you must note down how much you are willing to bet and the older woman will match your bet. You must then choose one of the three following options: a roll of 1 or 2, a roll of 3 or 4, or a roll of 5 or 6. Note down your choice on a piece of paper. The older woman will always choose the option one on from yours: in other words if you pick 1 or 2 she will pick 3 or 4. If you pick 5 or 6 she will pick 1 or 2. You then roll one die. If the roll is in your favour, one of the two numbers in your option, you win back your bet plus the older woman's of the same amount. If the number is one of her choices, you lose your bet. If the number is one neither of you have bet on you can change your bet amount if you wish and roll again till someone wins (being allowed to change your bet whenever no one wins the roll). After the maximum of five rounds (or before if you wish to stop), you must move on. Will you, if you have not already done so, before, head to the abbey (turn to **149**), the cemetery (turn to **190**), the heath (turn to **36**), or go in search of a blacksmith (turn to **74**)?

171

The Abbot is almost beside himself at your industry as you hand him the blood-red gem you recovered. Placing the gem carefully upon the ring on the table, the Abbot closes his eyes and begins a long and complex chant. Beads of sweat begin to form on his brow as the ritual incantation continues for some time. At last, he opens his eyes and utters one last command, the gem glowing a violently bright light that bathes the room red. Then the ring begins to scream an unholy howl before melting into a puddle of molten metal. Eventually, the three of you are left staring at the mess of cooling metal and fused gemstone on the table top. All of you are lifted by having the goal of freeing Bandur Green from Dar'noth's baleful influence one step closer. You and Orgriff help the suddenly tired Abbot back to his seat, where he gratefully sinks into the comfortable chair. 'I charge you now, good merchant. Save our town and our country from the ravages of war. Find Dar'noth, where-ever he hides on the heath, and destroy him.'

Orgriff clasps a hand on your shoulder and tells you that should you succeed, you will be known as a friend to the Thieves' Guild and have their protection against theft and other crime. With a thank you for their efforts, you set out immediately for the heath to end things once and for all. Turn to **180**.

172

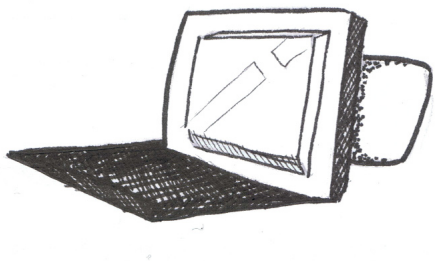
Unfortunately, the thug doesn't have a weapon on him, so you will still have to obtain one. The rest of your search of the fallen body only turns up a scrap of paper with the following written in poor handwriting upon it:

Thgier enrocs' regrop
Eerhtd liug'sev eihteno

If you understand it, you may turn to the reference indicated when prompted by the text. Pocketing the paper you carry on to the pawn broker's. Turn to **61**.

173

Roll two dice. If the total is equal to or less than your SKILL score, the vial smashes upon contact with Dar'noth and causes him some pain and flinching, although perhaps not as much as you might have wished. Deduct 2 STAMINA points from his STAMINA score when you engage him in combat. If the total is greater than your SKILL score, the vial misses, smashing somewhere out in the darkened heath. Turn to **148**.



174

With a careful hand, you gently try the side door to the shack and find that it moves easily, the small hut not having been secured. Pushing the door slowly open, you step carefully inside the badly lit one-room shack. One wall has a waist high shelf and a covered up window facing the path; this presumably allowed the shack's occupant to sell trinkets to the public. A small stove stands in one corner with an old pot on top, a ladle handle sticking out from under the iron lid. In another corner is a bunch of cloaks and rags. You can look in the pot on the stove (turn to **121**), poke about in the cloaks and rags (turn to **62**), or you can, if you have not already done so, head out to the battlefield to take a closer look around (turn to **16**), or head back up the path to the intersection where you can take the lesser used path (turn to **80**). If none of these options appeal, you can return to Bandur Green to follow up other avenues of investigation by going, if you have not already done so, in search of a blacksmith to supply you with a weapon (turn to **74**), to the cemetery (turn to **190**), to the The Frantic Rat tavern for information (turn to **107**), or to visit Karl at the abbey (turn to **149**). If you have already tried all of these options, you have reached the end of the day and must either drop by The Frantic Rat for a last drink (turn to **97**), or retire to your home for sleep (turn to **35**).

175

The kitchen isn't using any odd or special herbs that might prove useful, but there is enough in the way of cold cuts to put together 3 Provisions (add these to your *Adventure Sheet*). Will you now try and talk to the cook about Karl (turn to **84**), or escape the abbey by the door to the street and, if you have not already done so, go in search of a blacksmith to supply you with a weapon (turn to **74**), head to the cemetery (turn to **190**), visit The Frantic Rat tavern for information (turn to **107**), or leave town to explore the heath by day (turn to **36**)? If you have already tried all of these options, you have reached the end of the day and must either drop by The Frantic Rat for a last drink (turn to **97**), or retire to your home for sleep (turn to **35**).

176

You are blown off your feet and fall awkwardly. Lose 3 STAMINA points. Picking yourself up, you throw yourself at the sorcerer, who has used the opportunity to summon a Fire Demon to fight in his stead. You will have to battle this minion.

FIRE DEMON	SKILL 10	STAMINA 10

As the Fire Demon shoots fire from its nostrils, you need to make an additional roll every round that it wins. Roll one die. A roll of 1–4 is a hit and results in the loss of 2 further STAMINA points. During this battle, the sorcerer Dar'noth will not fight fair and will fire ZAP spells at you from outside the range of your sword. He can only get a clear shot every second Attack Round. On these rounds, roll one die. On a roll of a 1 or a 4 he hits, doing 4 STAMINA points damage. If you possess a ring and wish to destroy it, you may forego defending an Attack Round to attempt to throw it into the mouth of the Demon (remembering that, as you are not defending, you must record the damage to your STAMINA from the Fire Demon and Dar'noth if he successfully hits). Determine this by rolling two dice. If the total is equal to or less than your SKILL score, you have successfully thrown the ring into the mouth of the creature, which has swallowed it. Continue the battle till it is defeated. If the total is greater than your SKILL score, you miss and must retrieve the ring (in the next Attack Round you may defend but not attack). You can reattempt the throw as long as both you and the Demon are alive. If you defeat the Fire Demon, turn to **53**.

177

The only thing you discover by searching the west wing is that the monks are accommodated here, and that visiting this area puts you in greater danger of discovery due to the high traffic volume. Eventually, you judge that you have exhausted what time you have and decide to flee the abbey before the body of the dead monk is finally discovered. You find a smaller back door that opens out onto the street of Gate Run that skirts the wall of the town. Once outside and away from any observers, you catch your breath and take stock. Will you now, if you have not already done, so go in search of a blacksmith to supply you with a weapon (turn to **74**), head to the cemetery (turn to **190**), visit The Frantic Rat tavern for information (turn to **107**), or leave town to explore the heath by day (turn to **36**)? If you have already tried all of these options, you have reached the end of the day and must either drop by The Frantic Rat for a last drink (turn to **97**), or retire to your home for sleep (turn to **35**).

178

You greet Barnock the barkeep, with whom you have a cordial relationship, and he returns with a gruff hello and a wry smile as he straightens things up behind the bar. You wave off any interest in a jug of your favourite ale, and instead, the pressing issue of a weapon prompts you to ask for some advice. He explains that of the three blacksmiths in the Monger's Ward, two had left town in the last two weeks and the final one had planned to leave this morning at dawn. He condoles with you on your missed opportunity before prefacing a suggestion with 'I wouldn't normally suggest this to you.' He tells you that there is a pawn broker's in the Thieves' District that may have some weapons on offer, and you understand his hesitation in recommending it; goods stolen from merchants like yourself often end up on sale at such shady stores. When you ask him the location of the store within the District, the barkeep is forced to acknowledge that he doesn't know where it is, but he is fairly sure that the beggar known as "Lefty", one of many beggars lining the Royal Road on the way to the abbey, will know, and that asking him is the best course of action. Will you now ask him about the latest news (turn to **85**), about Karl (turn to **133**), attempt to talk to the elderly gentlemen (turn to **34**), or leave the tavern (turn to **10**)?

179

Orgriff spends some time studying you once you have finished speaking, before finally responding in turn. 'Indeed, it is a mystery to all of us as to what is taking place on the heath. I am curious as to why you chose to visit us for help instead of, say, the council or your own guild, merchant?' You explain about the sword you purchased from Vannix and how the Abbot indicated that such a product would have been "acquired" by a member of the Thieves' Guild and passed on to the pawn broker to sell. Orgriff give you a small, rueful smile and shakes his head, 'A man of the cloth who knows a little something about thievery. Now that isn't something you hear of every day.' Then, after a pause, he continues, 'It seems that our organisation may be of help to you. One of our members did indeed supply such goods to our friend Vannix, part of what was an off-the-books one-off job that we fear has caused more trouble than it was worth. The thief broke into the Merchants' Guild first, despite our pledge to leave your Guild Hall unmolested, yet took nothing it seems. Our later interrogation only gave us the knowledge that directions to the location of something was required, not a material item. After that, whoever our thief was working for directed them to steal what was hidden in that location. Presumably, they passed whatever it was onto their employer and then took the opportunity to steal anything else of value at that location, hence the sword you now carry.'

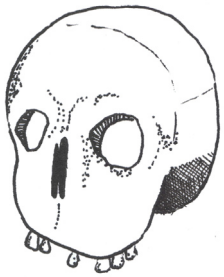
You nod in understanding before asking about the thief. 'They foolishly returned here after creating such trouble for our guild and we had to "let them go". All this talk about the West Well doesn't bode well for our continued good relationship with the town council.' You thank Orgriff and go to take your leave when he calls you back. 'One last thing if you really intended to discover what is happening on the heath. We have not learnt much, but one thing we have discovered is a name: Dar'noth.' With that, Orgriff dismisses you, and one of his "helpers" escorts you to the main door and back out onto the street corner. Will you now, if you have not already done so, go in search of a blacksmith to supply you with a weapon (turn to **74**), head to the cemetery (turn to **190**), investigate the well to the west of town (turn to **125**), visit The Frantic Rat tavern for information (turn to **107**), or leave town to explore the heath by day (turn to **36**)? If you have already tried all of these options, you have reached the end of the day and must either drop by The Frantic Rat for a last drink (turn to **97**), or retire to your home for sleep (turn to **35**).

180

It is late in the day, and the sun is already well on the way to setting after all the time spent readying yourself in town. The sky is a brilliant cast of reds and black as the sun sets and Vulcan Lane leads you to the North Gate and out onto the heath. You stand on the edge of the heath in the growing dusk. If you have come out onto the heath before, did you mark a tree? If so, turn to **68**. If not, you can head out towards the site of the Battle of Tanner Heath (turn to **14**), or follow a trail northwards through the heath (turn to **135**).

181

Remembering the words of the thief, you find the small loose block of stone she mentioned and with some effort, you manage to wiggle it out of place. Gingerly, you reach your hand into the hole and pull out a small, blood-red gem covered in a little bit of dirt and grime (add this to your *Adventure Sheet*). You replace the stone block. You can now, if you have not already done so, investigate the back room (turn to **51**), leave the crypt and look at the Tanner family mausoleum (turn to **44**), go to the Potters' Field (turn to **89**), try finding answers in the rows of headstones (turn to **112**), or leave the cemetery (turn to **13**).

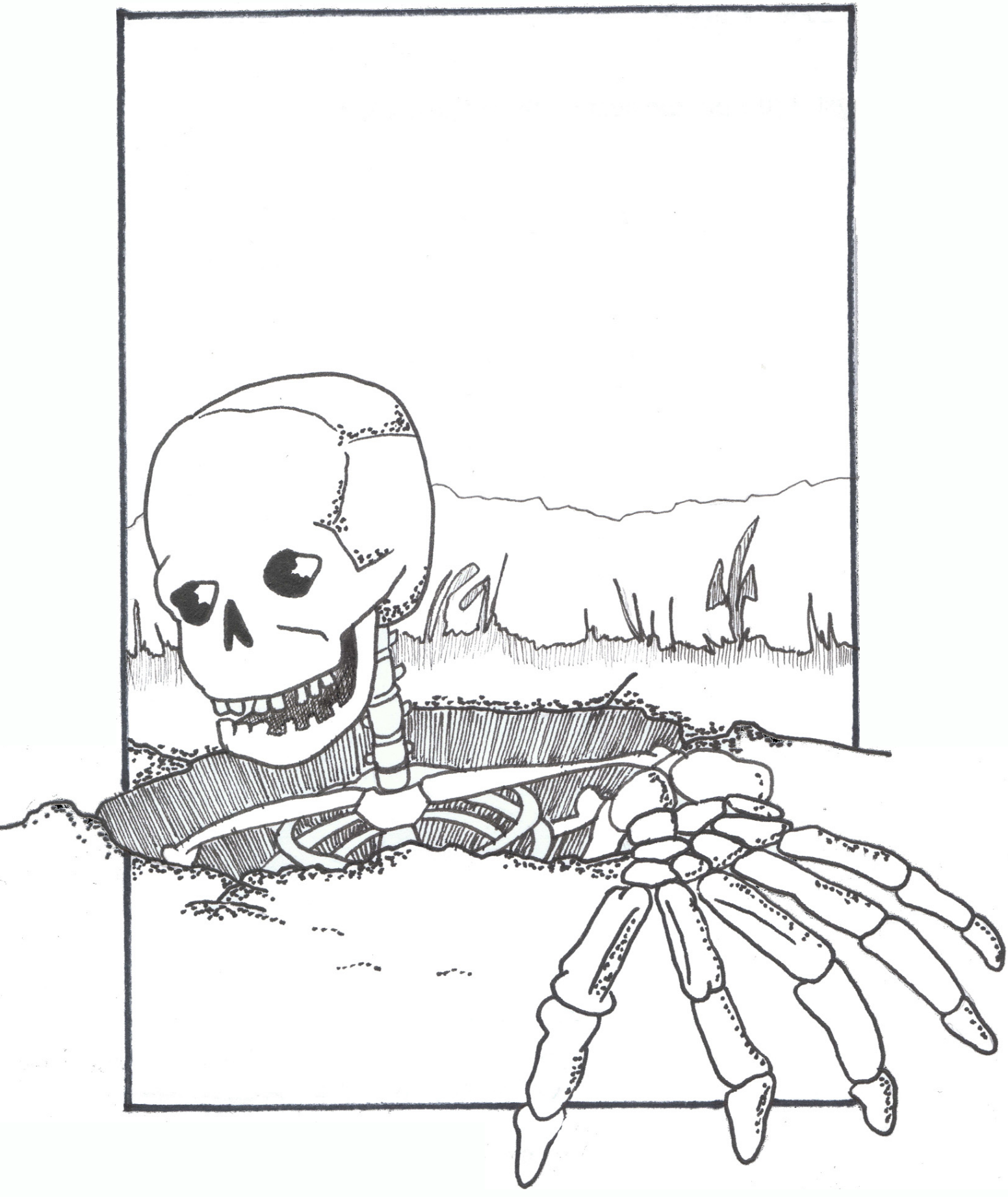


182

Payment accepted, the beggar explains that to his knowledge, all the blacksmiths, along with many other skilled workers, have fled town in the face of whatever menace they feel is growing unchecked out on the heath. He explains that beyond attempting to steal a weapon from someone who has one (a very risky proposition), you are out of luck. You are frustrated by the answer and scuff the ground to ease the tension you feel. If this is your second question, then the opportunity to ask questions has now passed as the town guards sweep in and remove the beggars from the area. You must now carry on to the abbey; turn to **69**. If this is only your first question, will you now pay him 1 more Gold Piece for further information about the abbey (turn to **27**), recent events (turn to **87**), or the heath (turn to **116**), or will you head on to the abbey (turn to **69**)?

183

The war hammer may prove to be a useful weapon due to its unique property of absorbing magic. Have you been blessed by a holy man since you obtained the war hammer? If so, turn to **70**. If not, turn to **155**.



184

Sitting down with the surly Dryaden, do you immediately recognise him? If you have met Vannix before, turn to **156**. If not, continue reading. The Dryaden, whose name you discover is Vannix, is at first reluctant to talk with a merchant like yourself. He does however tease you about the break in at the Merchants' Guild, which has yet to be prosecuted, and reckons that whatever is going on out on the heath also has to do with the disturbances at the cemetery by the South Gate. Are you still in need of a weapon? If so, turn to **33**. If not, he then gives you a piece of paper with the following note on it:

Etonen ins'xin
Naven osis ihteno

'That might prove useful if you need some equipment to help in your mission.' You finish up your conversation with the man and leave him to his drink. Will you now, if you have not already done so, talk to the older man (turn to **2**), or to the town guard (turn to **55**), or will you head home to sleep (turn to **35**)?

185

The trail meanders northwards, and you spot the occasional wild sheep that has escaped the farms that surround the heath to the west and north. All of this wandering is energetic work and you must stop to rest and eat a Provision (do not add any STAMINA points). If you do not have any Provisions, deduct 2 STAMINA points. You are beginning to think that you are wandering away from the potential source of the problems on the heath when you spot a figure up ahead. The figure is revealed, as you come closer, to be a Xoroa Warrior guarding one of the entrances to their underground colony. He challenges you verbally through a series of clicks and hums at your approach, and even though you try to show through gesture that you are not a threat to him or the colony, he attacks! You must defend yourself. Remember your –3 SKILL deficit if you are unarmed.

XOROA WARRIOR SKILL 10 STAMINA 11

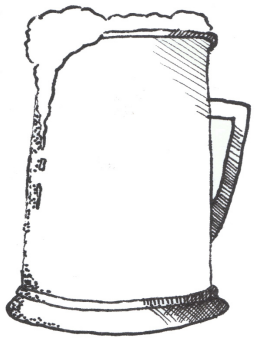
If you win, you decide that is it best to retreat back down the path before the other Xoroa discover the body. You return south where you can, if you have not already done so, head west (turn to **95**), or head right back down the path to the intersection where you can then go to the battlefield (turn to **131**)? If neither of these options appeal, you can return to Bandur Green to follow up other avenues of investigation by going, if you have not already done so, in search of a blacksmith to supply you with a weapon (turn to **74**), to the cemetery (turn to **190**), to the The Frantic Rat tavern for information (turn to **107**), or to visit Karl at the abbey (turn to **149**). If you have already tried all of these options, you have reached the end of the day and must either drop by The Frantic Rat for a last drink (turn to **97**), or retire to your home for sleep (turn to **35**).

186

Going in for a closer look, your foot stubs against something poking out from the cracked and broken ground. You prod the cream-coloured, egg-like projection sprouting from the ground with a finger, and at first, nothing appears to happen. Then the ground trembles slightly and the "egg" appears to grow before your eyes, rising out of the ground. You realise that it is not an egg, but the head of a skeleton. Its jaw flaps and the head swivels to fix upon you as the undead creature rises from the soil. Once the hands come free, one draws a sword from the rusty scabbard and the other flashes a shield with the insignia of a cockatrice upon it. With lurching steps, it pulls itself free of the ground at last and moves to attack. Remember your –3 SKILL handicap if unarmed. If you are armed, a mace does regular damage while any sharp weapons will only do 1 STAMINA point of damage per round of battle.

SKELETON SKILL 7 STAMINA 8

If you wish to *Escape* at any time, you can by retreating down the path (turn to **11**). If you win, turn to **86**.



187

After checking that your coin is genuine using the classic "bite test", he tells you that to find a weapon, you should seek out Vannix's Sticky Fingers, a pawn broker's at 6 Gutfish Lane off the Black Narrow in the Thieves' District. If this is your second question, the town guards have arrived and force the beggars to move on, leaving you with no option but to carry on to the abbey; turn to **69**. If this is only your first question, will you now pay him 1 more Gold Piece for further information about the abbey (turn to **167**), the heath (turn to **75**), or local events (turn to **9**), or will you head on to the abbey (turn to **69**)?

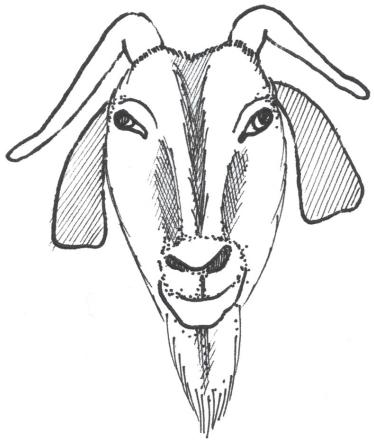
188

You catch up with the sorcerer out on the heath, under the pale moonlight and somewhere between his two camps of undead minions. 'So, it's a fight you want you, is it? Casper will burn when I am done with you and this pathetic corner of the world!' The sorcerer throws a stream of lighting at you from his hands, which you are forced to dodge. Do you still have the ring of the dead thief? If so, turn to **72**. If you destroyed the ring, turn to **127**. If you never found a ring, turn to **146**.

189

You are confronted by more treatises on agriculture and horticulture than you had possibly thought could be written. Before you can turn to examine the shelves further for something that isn't about animals and plants, you hear voices in the corridor. Carefully you extricate yourself from the library before you are discovered and flee the abbey, almost being spotted several times before you find a smaller back door that opens out onto the street of Gate Run that skirts the wall of the town. Once outside and away from any observers, you catch your breath and take stock. Will you now, if you have not already done so, go in search of a blacksmith to supply

you with a weapon (turn to **74**), head to the cemetery (turn to **190**), visit The Frantic Rat tavern for information (turn to **107**), or leave town to explore the heath by day (turn to **36**)? If you have already tried all of these options, you have reached the end of the day and must either drop by The Frantic Rat for a last drink (turn to **97**), or retire to your home for sleep (turn to **35**).



190

It is the rather sombre Dead Row that leads directly south from Bandur Common through the town to the South Gate where the cemetery lies outside the town walls beside the road leading to Hamblehill Castle. Passing the gate, you wander off the road and into row upon row of headstones and markers, with the occasional family crypt in evidence to celebrate a wealthier family. You stop at the grave markers of your own parents for a moment of silence and prayer in respect for the pair who raised you. Obligations completed, you have to decide what to do now that you are here. Will you:

Take a look at the Potters' Field?	Turn to **89**.
Investigate the crypt of the Stable family?	Turn to **151**.
Search the headstones for clues?	Turn to **112**.
Investigate the Tanner family mausoleum?	Turn to **44**.

Or you can leave and, if you have not already done so, search for a weapon (turn to **74**), visit The Frantic Rat for information (turn to **107**), leave town and explore the heath by day (turn to **36**), or visit Karl at the abbey (turn to **149**). If you have already tried all of these options you have reached the end of the day and must either drop by The Frantic Rat for a last drink (turn to **97**), or retire to your home for sleep (turn to **35**).

191

A search reveals a handful of Gold Pieces (add 7 Gold Pieces to your *Adventure Sheet*). Will you, if you have not already done so, attempt to use the passageway to escape (turn to **105**), investigate the body (turn to **49**), look in the knapsack (turn to **136**), or climb out the way you came if you possess a rope (turn to **83**)?

192

Taking hold of the rope, you straddle the well before attempting to slowly climb down, the rope creaking and protesting as you put your weight on it. *Test your Luck*. If you are Lucky, turn to **113**. If you are Unlucky, turn to **4**.

193

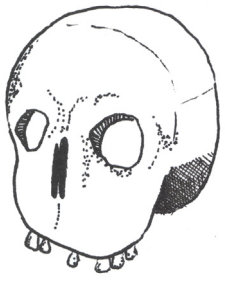
With another Cider for yourself, and a Darrow Ale for the town guard, you begin talking. He speaks of how the town council is frustrated by the lack of help from Lendle, how some odd disturbances of graves have been taking place recently at the cemetery by the South Gate, and that the guards are terrified (although not him) to do night duty on the North Gate that leads out onto the heath. He even waxes on about the growing number of rotting disease cases they have had to direct to Rosie Fletcher, the town wise woman at 147 King's West. Eventually his talk descends into drunken rambling and you give up on learning anything further. Will you now, if you have not already done so, talk to the older man (turn to **2**), talk to the Dryaden (turn to **184**), or head home to end the evening (turn to **35**)?

194

Do you possess an amulet of protection against the undead? If so, the touch of the Ghoul does nothing. Return to **77** and finish the fight. If not, after the fourth touch, you feel a burning numbness that sweeps your body, and you fall to the ground. With dread taking hold, you realise you are paralysed and unable to prevent the Ghoul from feasting on your body.

195

You are extremely ill, and you fall to the ground as your body breaks out in an all-over sweat. This continues for some time till eventually you feel yourself coming right again. You have cured yourself of the rotting disease of the Decayer, but it has taken its toll. Roll one die and add 3 for the number of STAMINA points you have lost attempting this cure. If you are still alive after that, it is lucky that none of the creatures in the arena appear to have seen a thing of your fight, or your use of the Fluxweed. Then, off to one side of the arena, you spot a dark robed figure stalking off to the west with two other figures as bodyguards. You decide to shadow this figure. Turn to **137**.



196

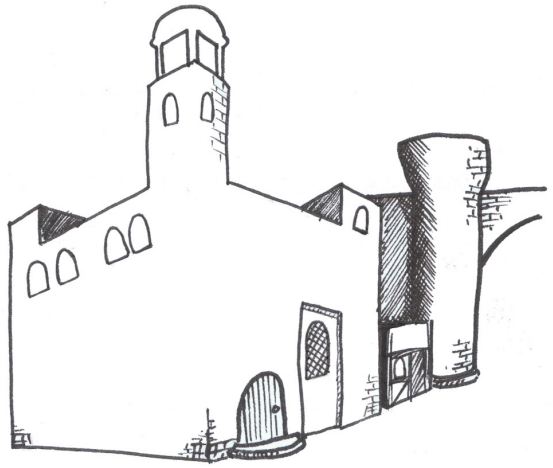
You examine the wicked looking black mace. It is not a weapon that you are familiar with, but it does feel good in your hand. 'Can't rightly recall where I got that one from,' shrugs Vannix, 'but it will cost you 15 Gold Pieces.' Will you purchase it (turn to **75**), or look at another weapon?

The standard sword.	Turn to **24**.
The rune covered sword.	Turn to **122**.
The silver knife.	Turn to **99**.

197

You approach the fireplace slowly and carefully before sitting in an empty seat. You start slightly at the two men seated opposite you. One, who'd you expect to be in the Guild Hall, is Orgriff, the appointed spokesperson for the Guild. The other is the Abbot of the abbey on the east side of the town. Your expression of surprise at his presence must be obvious on your face, as he favours you with a winsome grin and a chuckle. 'You are surprised to see me here,' he states, and you manage to nod. 'Orgriff and I have both been troubled by the growing strangeness of events out on the heath and have been keeping our eyes and ears open. This little meeting you have stumbled upon is merely a session to pool what we have discovered in the past week and work through ideas and theories. Perhaps you would like to pitch in and help with what you have learnt since you have made the effort to help this town?'

Agreeing, you explain everything you have discovered or achieved in the time since you returned home from Royal Lendle. At the end of your tale, both men sink back in their respective chairs to ponder things. Do you have a notebook with you? If so, turn to **48**. If not, both men give you their good wishes on your self imposed mission. You take your leave of the parlour and head from the Guild through the streets towards the heath. Turn to **180**.



198

With a straightening of your back, you stand and stride down into the middle of the area, the red glow playing tricks with your eyes as shadows seem to move of their own volition. At first none of the assembled undead react to your sudden appearance, but then a Decayer lurches forward to attack. Remember your –3 SKILL handicap if you are unarmed.

DECAYER SKILL 7 STAMINA 5

During the battle, after every third round of combat you must *Test your Luck*. If you are Lucky, the combat carries on as normal. If you are Unlucky, you are infected by the rotting disease Decayers are known for (deduct 2 extra STAMINA points). If you win and possess an amulet of protection from the powers of the undead, the disease will fade after the initial loss of two STAMINA points. If you win and possess a bag of pungent herbs, you can take these, as they are a cure that was provided to the members of the Guild. Otherwise, from now on till such time as you find a cure or die, you must roll one die at the end of every third paragraph you turn to. An odd roll means you lose no STAMINA. An even roll results in the loss of two more STAMINA points. If you win, a figure arrives from the edge of the area, flanked by two humanoid bodyguards. Turn to **115**.

199

You approach the beggar with the missing legs and press 2 Gold Pieces into his hands, telling him that you would like some information. What will you ask him about?

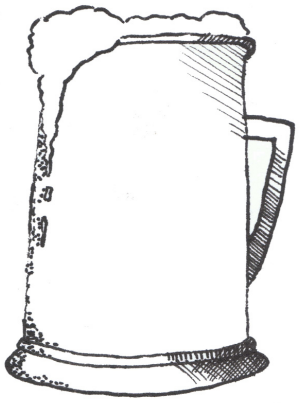
The abbey?	Turn to **19**.
Weapons?	Turn to **54**.
The heath?	Turn to **104**.
Local goings on?	Turn to **152**.

200

The body of Dar'noth the sorcerer falls to the ground, his evil force finally spent. After resting and restoring yourself as best you can, you return to one of the battle camps and scrounge up the materials needed to fashion a crude stretcher. This task accomplished, you begin the arduous job of dragging the sorcerer's body back to Bandur Green.

Upon your arrival at The Frantic Rat early that morning when the sun is shortly due to rise, you learn that the troops from Royal Lendle are finally on their way. They will arrive in time to help with the clean up of the heath, so that the battlefield may once more lie undisturbed. As you managed to destroy the ring, it will be easy for the soldiers to dispatch the undead and release their trapped souls, for without such an action those resurrected by Dar'noth would have persisted despite being "slain". Your actions also mean that your friend Karl can be released from his tormented existence, after which you can attend a funeral in his memory. You also did many in the region a great favour by completing the final work of Narron the Steady by destroying the ring. You find the frequent comparisons made between yourself and the hero of Bandur Green more than satisfactory.

Later, after all the details have been sorted, you will become something of a hero at your local tavern, and it will feel nice to bask in the adulation of your friends. For now however, a different adventure awaits — the drink waiting for you on the bar of The Frantic Rat!



THE FACT OF FICTION

"The Fact of Fiction" is a series of articles designed to take a deeper look at the information presented in a *Fighting Fantasy* gamebook, whether it be in-jokes, goofs, continuity with other gamebooks, the background to the creation of the book, or anything else which caught our attention and we thought was worth commenting on! In many ways it is to act like a DVD commentary for the book, telling you things that you might not have already known.

Titan City is in peril! **Alexander Ballingall** puts on a spandex super-suit and ventures forth to fight injustice and super-villains...

Title Page

• The working title for the adventure was *Superheroes*, as detailed in the news section of *Warlock* #5 (June 1985). The gamebook shares its published title with a relatively famous UK radio anthology series of the 1940s and 50s of which a young Steve Jackson may well have been aware.

• The use of the acronym F.E.A.R. for an organisation name is a common feature of superhero comics with examples such as S.H.I.E.L.D. from the comic *Strange Tales* (created 1965), which most recently appeared in the *Iron Man* film (2008).

How to Battle the Super-Villains of Titan City

• The superhero rules allow the player to choose from four different super powers. These are 'Super Strength' in a reference to *Superman* (created 1938), 'Psi-Powers' which is most likely a combination of Jean Grey and Professor Xaiver of *X-Men* (created 1963), 'Energy Blast' as another likely *X-Men* reference, this time to Scott Summers, and 'ETS' (Enhanced Technological Skill), which probably reflects Batman (created 1939) and his accessory belt – an item which a player with ETS has as equipment for the adventure.

Background

• We learn that F.E.A.R. stands for the Federation of Euro-American Rebels, suggesting that the location of the book – Titan City – is set on Earth. Titan City itself was most likely named after the fantasy world Titan within which most of the *Fighting Fantasy* gamebook range is set. This appears to intimate that Titan City may be set in a future version of the Titan world, but the definition of F.E.A.R. and a mention of London in 410 seal the deal as to an alternative Earth setting (see 7, 88, 197, and 355 for further discussion).

• A *Superman* influence apparent in the "Background" is the hero having a double identity of superhero and office worker, in the same way that Clark Kent does as superhero and reporter for *The Daily Planet* newspaper. *Batman* comes into play with the Crimewatch that alerts the hero to crimes in progress, being akin to the Bat Phone (of the 1966 television series) or the Bat Signal (introduced to the comic in 1942), which allow the police to alert Batman when the city is in

But when duty calls, you become the Silver Crusader, upholder of justice; and you have taken an oath to serve in the fight against crime in Titan City.

Author Steve Jackson was perhaps the more adventurous of the dynamic duo who gave us *Fighting Fantasy* in the first place. While Ian Livingstone generally stuck to a similar format throughout his output (*Freeway Fighter* excepted), Jackson immediately pushed to include a magic system (*The Citadel of Chaos*), ventured into the genres of science fiction (*Starship* Traveller) and horror (*House of Hell*), and attempted the only true multi-book series of the range (*Sorcery!*) before bowing out with what is usually considered to be the hardest gamebook of the series: *Creature of Havoc*.

In the midst of all this in 1985, at probably the peak of the ranges popularity, he incorporated the superhero genre into the world of *Fighting Fantasy*. In *Appointment with F.E.A.R.* Jackson presents a deft blend of superhero staples along with a healthy dose of knowing winks to the readership, who are essentially asked to play along with a sub-game within the standard gamebook adventure of guessing what he is parodying in any particular given paragraph.

The unique and expansive nature of the game, a result of the four super powers allowing for several different routes through the gamebook, lead to it being the first gamebook to exceed the standard 400 paragraphs – something Jackson would repeat a year later to a larger extent with his swan song *Creature of Havoc*.

Appointment with F.E.A.R. was a brave experiment at pushing the boundaries of what could be achieved with the *Fighting Fantasy* range, which makes it a shame that shortly afterwards Jackson stopped writing for the series and that other such experiments into other genres were not attempted.

Photo © Eric Dess, 2009. Used with permission. Visit Cool Cats at www.coolcats.net

danger.

• *Appointment with F.E.A.R.* is the first *Fighting Fantasy* gamebook in which the hero is given a proper name, Jean Lafayette, rather than just being referred to as "YOU" or by some titled applied by other characters, such as "The Analander" in the *Sorcery!* adventures. But who is Lafayette named after? No comic characters have the name Lafayette till Franky Lafayette (aka "Greyshirt") in the 1999 comic *Tomorrow Stories*. Instead, is Lafayette named after the physical address of All-American Publications formed in 1938? The company was located at 225 Lafayette Street in Manhattan, New York, and was a sister-publication to DC Comics, with which it merged in 1944.

• Given that the player can choose their super power, identifying Lafayette with a specific comic-book superhero is not possible, but the way in which the main villain, Vladmir Utoshski, transforms himself into the "Titanium Cyborg" using electronic enhancements calls to mind Dr. Octopus from *Spider-Man* (created 1962).

1

The hero walks to work in the morning, while an escalating argument draws a crowd.

• Two locations are mentioned, with Clark Street being a nod to Jerry Siegel and Joe Shuster's Clark Kent of *Superman* and Audubon Park being named after American naturalist John James Audubon (1785-1851), who already has five parks in the US named for him so what is one more! Perhaps in this case Jackson was thinking of the one in New Jersey.

• The Cougar GS mentioned as apparently being on the run from the police was a relatively new model of car at the time as the GS range had only been introduced in 1982 (the model pictured above is the 1984 GS V6).

2

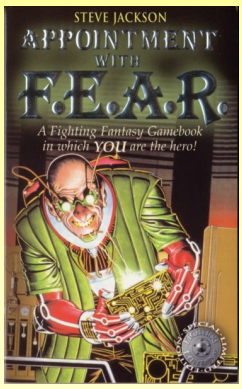
The villain Kareem is sealed within a crate for collection by the police.

• Mustapha Kareem's super-villain "The Mummy" is perhaps based on Marvel Comics superhero N'Kantu, the Living Mummy (created 1973). The choice of villain here may have been based on the fact that mummies have been a staple monster of the *Fighting Fantasy* series since the first one cropped up in Ian Livingstone's *City of Thieves* (1983). Jackson used his first one in *Fighting Fantasy – The Role-Playing Game* (1984).

3

The hero engages in the fight with Bronski who wields a battery-powered electric knife.

FURTHER INFORMATION



AUTHOR: Steve Jackson
COVER ARTIST: Brian Bolland
INTERIOR ARTIST: Declan Considine
PUBLISHED: September 26 1985
PUBLISHER: Puffin
GAMEBOOK NUMBER: 17
REPUBLISHED: April 1 2004
PUBLISHER: Wizard
GAMEBOOK NUMBER: 18
AVAILABILITY: In print

• "Chainsaw" Bronski is perhaps a reflection of a 1980s obsessions with characters wielding chainsaws: see Ash from the *Evil Dead* films (first film 1981); *Abslom Daak – Dalek Killer*, back up comic strip from *Doctor Who Weekly* (introduced in 1980); *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre 2* (film from 1986); the character of Buzzsaw from the 1987 film *The Running Man*; *Hollywood Chainsaw Hookers* (a 1988 film); and Games Workshop's own effort with the board game *Chainsaw Warrior*, released in 1987 and created by later *Fighting Fantasy* gamebook writer Stephen Hand (1989's *Dead of Night*).

• Bronski himself is probably named after the pop act Bronski Beat who scored a #1 hit in the UK with *Why?* in the September of 1984 when *Appointment with F.E.A.R.* would have been in the planning stages.

• The standard modern electric knife, as opposed to other versions, was patented in 1964 by Arthur H. Freeman of the General Electric Company.

7

The crowds are out to see the President and the hero has to fight through them to get a decent view.

• The use of "President" seems to confirm a US location for the gamebook (see "Background").

8

Trapping a thief stealing chocolate bars proves deadly for the hero.

• Munchie bars are most likely a nod to Crunchie bars, a bar launched by J.S. Fry & Sons in 1929. Now produced by Cadbury, they are available in the UK, Ireland, Australia, New

Zealand, India, South Africa and Canada.

10

The hero heads home for the day and watches a little television.

• The hero's boss, Jonah Whyte, is a combination of two comic book newspaper editors: Perry White, introduced to the *Superman* comic in 1940, and J. Jonah Jameson, who was first featured in *Spider-Man* in 1963.

• Meanwhile, Radd Square is named after Norrin Radd, the "Silver Surfer" (created 1966).

15

The hero is faced with the dilemma of deciding which fun fair attraction to try first.

• The Wisneyland fair grounds are an obvious nod to Disneyland, which first opened in California in 1955.

16

After the rescue of Drew Swain, the hero takes the time to look through the "Mantrapper's" gadgets.

• The first of two direct references to Bruce Wayne (of *Batman*) is sound-a-like Drew Swain who is a billionaire kidnapped by the "Mantrapper" (see 195 for the second).

• The Murdock Nuclear Laboratories is no doubt a link to *Daredevil* hero Matt Murdock (created 1964) who was, like many a superhero or villain, affected by a radioactive substance which grants him his powers.

17

The hero tries to follow up a clue, involving a monogrammed medallion, with little luck.

• Medallions, as part of gaudy necklaces, were all the rage fashion-wise for both men and women in the Eighties, and were especially prominent in the growing Hip Hop music genre.

18

Off to work, the hero tries to come up with an excuse for missing work the previous day.

• Cowfield Dairy is probably a simple play on meanings.

19

The hero flies back to Parker Airport with the captured villains.

• Parker Airport is a reference to Peter Parker, hero of *Spider-Man*. The other half of his name is referenced in a later paragraph (see 181).

22

The "Creature if Carnage" returns to his human form and the battle then commences.

• The "Creature of Carnage" and his transformation brings to mind the Hulk (created 1962). His human identity, Illya Karpov, is probably based on a combination of Anatoly Karpov, who became World Chess Champion in 1975, and Illya Nickovetch Kuryakin, the fictional spy played by David McCallum in *The Man from U.N.C.L.E.* (created 1964).

32

The "Macro Brain" defeats the hero, firing a wall of flame from the front of his helicopter.

• Perhaps here the "Macro Brain" is a reference to *Incredible Hulk* character, "The Leader" (created 1964), or a reference to the big-brained Mekon of the English *Dan Dare* comics (created 1950).

34

The hero visits the home of Dr. Crayfish and is met at the door by the doctor's maid.

• Here we have Dr. Charles Crayfish working on the "Star Wars" satellite system, the nickname for the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) which US Preisdent Ronald Reagan announced in March 1983. In 1991 the US turned away from the space-based SDI plan to ground-based alternatives.

• The name for the project is taken from the successful film franchise that, at the time *Appointment with F.E.A.R.* was published, had only recently completed the first trilogy (along with the made-for-television movie *The Ewok Adventure* which was released in the UK as the theatrical film *Caravan of Courage: An Ewok Adventure*).

37

The hero leaves the fun house and hands a key over to a boy crying by his bicycle.

• Here Lafayette meets *Titan Times* newspaper reporter Grant Morley. Is he named after Morley Safer, the long-time host of *60 Minutes* (created 1968), or sometimes controversial *New Musical Express* (*NME*) journalist Paul Morley, who had only just left the magazine in 1983, and was instrumental in the promotion and marketing of Eighties pop success Frankie Goes to Hollywood (who had three number one hits across 1983-84)?

39

The hero heads downtown towards the waterfront as part of a search for clues.

• Like Cowfield Dairy (see 18), Oceanaria Marina is a simple play on words, but is Clancey Bay a nod to Chief Clancey O'Hara, a character created for the 1966 *Batman* television series?

42

What kind of book to buy the boss? The hero browses the selection available and selects a gamebook.

• The very first *Fighting Fantasy* gamebook, *The Warlock of Firetop Mountain*, makes an unexpected appearance on a book store shelf, in what can be described as a very post-modern moment (post-modern being something embodying either extreme complexity, contradiction, ambiguity, diversity, interconnectedness or interreferentiality). The sequel, *Deadline to Destruction*, will attempt something similar (see "Sequel").

43

The hero goes to take in a musical, only to witness the star being kidnapped during the final scene!

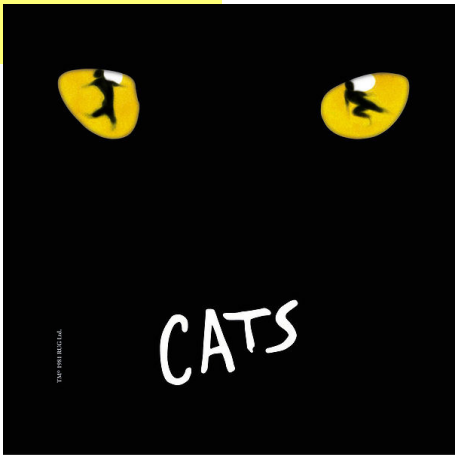
SEQUEL

Appointment with F.E.A.R. is notable for having a sequel, and one not by the original author. *Deadline to Destruction* was a 200 paragraph mini adventure by Gavin Shute and illustrated by David Stevens that was published in *Warlock* #12 (October 1986). This time around the hero is on a mission to stop the "Dynamo" from holding the city ransom. The mini adventure replicated much of the original gamebook, such as the same four superpowers and the use of clues at the beginning.

Deadline to Destruction makes mention of the Marvel Comics character Spider-Man in 154, the hero referring to him as their "comic book rival". This either indicates either Spider-Man is fictional and the hero feels inadequate when compared to the comic book hero, or that Spider-Man is real and the hero feels he isn't a serious enough superhero!

Finally, the adventure copies the post-modern moment of buying a *Fighting Fantasy* gamebook (see 42) with one in which the hero examines a copy of *Appointment with F.E.A.R.* itself in 180, even thought the mini adventure is a sequel to that book! The adventure goes one further and has Gerry the Grass, presumably speaking for the writer Shute, describe the book as being "a good 'un!"

• The musical, featuring a group of performers dressed as rats and singing to each other in a rubbish tip, is definitely a reference to the Andrew Lloyd Webber musical *Cats*. This musical, based on the book *Old Possum's Book of Practical Cats* by T.S. Eliot, opened in the London West End in 1981 and by 1983 had won several awards. Jackson later gives the musical the title 'Rats' in 103 and makes another play on names, this time involving the composer himself, at 218.



51

The hero makes a phone call to Susan in order for her to help convince the "Tormentor" to land the plane safely.

• While the relationship between Susan Blythe and Richard Storm (the "Tormentor") isn't spelt out, 260 suggests they are husband and wife or at the very least dating. This is interesting, as their names conjure up three members of the *Fantastic Four* (created 1961). In Richard Storm we have Reed Richards ("Mr Fantastic") and Johnny Storm (the "Human Torch") and with Susan we have Susan Storm (the blue tight-suited "Invisible Woman") who was Johnny's sister and Reed's wife in the comics! The fourth and final member of the team is name-checked in 86.

• The surname Blythe may come from another female comic book character kitted out in tight-fitting blue gear, Blythe Bonner, who first appeared in *Firestorm* in 1984.

60

One of the police officers relates to the hero reports of a shark off the shore at Starkers Beach.

• Starkers Beach is a possible reference to Tony Stark of *Iron Man* (created 1963).

• Meanwhile, the shark sighting is no doubt a reference to the shark of the *Jaws* franchise of films, the third title of which (*Jaws 3-D*) had been released in cinemas in 1983.

69

The hero takes on the "Devastator" with a vial of phenolic acid.

• There isn't a specific acid by this name, "phenolic" here probably referring to the class of chemical compounds under that name. The compounds of this group are highly acidic, which matches the reaction of the "Devastator" to being splashed by some!

• Meanwhile, the rock-like nature of the "Devastator" most likely seems to be a reference to the "Thing" from the *Fantastic Four* (more at 86).

75

The hero is faced with a choice of activities. What to do today, watch the President or the Football?

• Further confirmation of a US-based setting, with the appearance of two American Football teams in the Titan Tigers and the Metro Mohawks. The Metro Mohawks at the game are representing Metroville, perhaps a reference to the city of Metropolis from *Superman*, just as Titan City is likely to be a reference to Gotham City from *Batman*.

• American Football is a derivation of Rugby that developed in the latter part of the nineteenth century, the first intercollegiate game being played between Rutgers and Princeton universities in 1869. However, it would not be till the late 1950s that the game would become a national sport in the USA.

76

The hero spends time with their Aunt Florence being fussed over and eventually staying the night.

• Two references in this paragraph. The first is Aunt Florence, who is a nod to Peter Parker's Aunt May in *Spider-Man*, and the second is the location of Whirls' Court Exhibition Centre, a play on the Earl's Court Exhibition Centre in London (opened 1937).

83

The hero checks the book records and turns up a deed for Titan abbatoir, now owned by Sylvia Frost.

• Sylvia Frost could potentially be based on the *Uncanny X-Men* character Emma Frost, who was introduced to the comic in 1980. Notably, both have a nickname using the title "Queen". Sylvia is the "Ice Queen" and Emma the "White Queen".

86

Getting off the train, the hero goes to work once more, only

Cats logo © RUG Ltd., 1981.

to told off by the boss!

• Grimm Street probably refers to Ben Grimm, the "Thing", one of the Fantastic Four. The other three of the team were name-checked back in 51.

88

One of the clues has the super-villain the "Alchmist" planning to raid a bank.

• Further evidence of an Earth-based setting for Titan City as a fictional part of the United States. Cleveland is a city in the US state of Ohio, being founded in 1796.

90

Within the Fun House the hero confronts the super-villain the "Scarlet Prankster".

• The "Scarlet Prankster" is most likely based on *Daredevil* villain the "Jester" who first appeared in that comic in 1968.

92

The hero sees off the "Ringmaster's" pets through the use of catnip.

• The password "Quicksilver" is a possible *X-Men* reference to the character Pietro Django Maximoff. "Quicksilver", as he is better know, was first featured in the comic *The X-Men* in 1964.

97

The hero arrives at the pool to find that it is frozen over and two girls are stuck in the ice!

• Stanley Pool is easily a nod to Marvel comic book legend Stan Lee (born 1922), famous for creating or co-creating many memorable comic book characters including Spider-Man, the Fantastic Four, the X-Men, Iron Man, the Hulk, Thor, and Daredevil.

107

The hero wonders about the F.E.A.R. meeting and if the Colonel can help.

• Is Colonel Saunders a thinly veiled reference to Kentucky Fried Chicken founder Harlan 'Colonel' Sanders (1890-1980)? His grip on the chickens of the world began in 1929, although KFC didn't become a franchise till 1952.

111

The hero stops at a shop. What better way to butter up the boss than by buying a gift?

• Harrold's Department Store is none other than Harrod's Department Store in Knightsbridge, London (founded 1834).

114

The "Creature of Carnage" interrupts a Football game that the hero has gone to watch.

• Here Jackson pays homage to Dino De Laurentiis' re-imagined Flash Gordon (created 1934, De Laurentiis' film 1980) in the character of American Football player "Streak" Gordon, who plays for the Titan Tigers. Prior to the 1980 film Gordon had not been portrayed as a Football player, Gordon's preferred sport being polo instead.

122

The evening concert that the hero was planning to attend has been cancelled.

• Addison Square Gardens is equivalent to Madison Square Gardens of Manhattan, New York (originally built 1879).

• Georgie Boy (and his Vulture Club mentioned in 226) is a parody of Boy George, who was riding high in popularity with the group Culture Club, having had a number 1 album in 1983 and a number 2 in 1984. That Jackson has Georgie struck down by "facial dermatitis" tells us a lot about his thoughts on Culture Club at the time of writing the book!

125

Walking along the hero spots a news broadcast on a TV in the window of an home applicance shop.

• Does Danvers Street here refer to Carol Danvers, also know as Ms. Marvel? Introduced as a regular human in *Marvel Super-Heroes* in 1968, she gained her super powers in the first issue of *Ms. Marvel* in 1977.

157

The hero is running late to see the Presidential cavalcade when the President is assassinated!

• The events depicted here are a definite reference to the assassination of John F. Kennedy in Dallas, Texas on November 22nd 1963. Declan Considine's illustration to accompany the paragraph also goes some way to echoing that event. The assassin is a man with a gun on a roof, mimicking Lee Harvey Oswald shooting from the sixth floor of the Texas Book Depository. But playing up to the conspiracy rumours that surround the event, Jackson also has a decoy in the crowd in a modified version of the "man on the grassy knoll" scenario.

179

The hero must investigate either a biomechanical engineering company or a Chinese laundry.

• Is the biomechanical company Chomsky and Sons named after famous American linguist Avram Noam Chomsky (born 1928), whose political views gained him further notoriety from the 1960s onwards?

181

The Crimewatch flashes up two issues to deal with.

• In the second half of the Peter Parker reference (see 19) we are presented with Peter Labs.

189

The hero buys a music album and heads straight home to listen to it.

• Mention is made of the hero buying Michael Blackson's new album 'Willer', a pun on *Thriller* by the late pop artist Michael Jackson (1958-2009). The album had been released in November 1982 and the single of the same name in early 1984, which probably meant the single had had some fairly heavy airplay by the time Jackson began writing the gamebook in late 1984/early 1985.

• If we were to take this as a means of dating the alternative universe of the gamebook, *Appointment with F.E.A.R.* is set in late 1982/early 1983!

• In contrast to 122, the hero buys the music album, which suggests that Jackson was far more keen on the music of his namesake than he was of Culture Club.

195
The hero has to break some bad news to the estranged wife of Wayne Bruce.
• The second of the two Bruce Wayne parodies (see 16) appears in the form of Wayne Bruce, a dead millionaire.

197
After rescuing a boy from a shark the hero is given the phone number to a circus.
• Taking the setting as being the US, the phone number prefix of 444 given here was an unused exchange number in 1985, and even today, under the North American Numbering Plan instituted in 1995, it remains unused. Curiously, Steve Jackson chose to ignore the 555 prefix, commonly used since the 1970s in American television and film when a phone number is given, as this prefix remains generally unused. In fact the numbers 555-0100 through 555-0199 have since been specifically reserved for fictional use only.

202
The hero stops for a bite of pizza and witnesses the kidnapping of Drew Swain.
• Banner Street here is a reference to Dr. Bruce Banner, the mild mannered human counterpart of the Hulk.

218
It is the end of the day. Will the hero retire home for the evening or head out on the town to take in a muscial?
• Following on from the parody of *Cats* (see 43), Jackson presents us with Lloyd Webber-Andrews, a reference to composer of the musical Andrew Lloyd-Webber.

222
One of the beginning clues for the hero notes the recent arrival of Metroville villainess Tiger Cat.
• Tiger Cat is most likely a reference to long-time Batman anti-hero Catwoman, who was first introduced in *Batman* in 1940.

245
At police headquarters the hero learns about what has been taking place recently.
• Lieutenant Wojak is based on Lt. Theo Kojak, the hero of the television series *Kojak*. The series ran on CBS from 1973 to 1978 and featured Aristotelis "Telly" Savalas (1922-1994) as the eponymous investigator.

264
Shopping leads to the hero, in civilian disguise, bumping into their informant Gerry the Grass.
• The game mentioned here, 'Whack Man', is most likely a reference to パックマン (Pac-Man), which was released in Japan in 1980.

349
Arriving a the airport, the hero has to decide which hanger to search for clues.
• More *X-Men* references, with three airport hangers named Xavier (Professor X), Summer (Cyclops), and McCoy (Beast).

355
Shopping for a gift is interrupted by the presence of the Fire Warriors in the women's underwear department.
• Board games *Monopoly* (Parker Bros. version patented 1935), *Trivial Pursuit* (released 1982), and role-playing game *Dungeons & Dragons* (created 1974) are named checked as products in the store.
• Also featured, this time in the accompanying illustration, is a Nazi swastika (Hitler's flag designed in 1925) as jewellery for one of the Fire Warriors. This further cements the location of the gamebook as an alternative Earth. This is also a nod to the then recent, almost mainstream, fashion flirtation with Nazi imagery, such as S.S. uniforms and swastika armbands. In most cases they were utilised by some musical groups for shock value (Siouxsie Sioux of Siouxsie & the Banshees is one example.).

369
Which problem to deal with first? Will the hero rescue the cat or apprehend "Chainsaw" Bronski?
• The illustration for this paragraph shows "Chainsaw" Bronski up to some general 'meanness', including the decapitation of a statue in a moment reminiscent of the scene in the film *Goldfinger* (1964), where Oddjob uses his bowler hat to slice the head off a statue.

374
Did the hero only catch the decoy involved in the assassination of the President?
• This brings an addition to the assassination conspiracy (see 157) that mimics the JFK scenario, with doubt brought up about the bullets involved. This mirrors confusion over how many shots were fired and from where, as some recorded sound evidence supposedly points to a second gunman with a different gun.

410
The hero arrives at the airport where the "Tormentor" has taken a plane full of people hostage.
• The McDonnell Douglas DC-10 first entered service with American Airlines in 1971 and, whilst still in service today with some non-major airlines (Biman Bangladesh Airlines and Omni Air International are two examples), was no longer in production after 1989.

423
The hero studies a packet of cigarettes that may or may not contain a coded message.
• The Karlsborough cigarettes are a play on Marlboro brand cigarettes (first sold in 1847).

428
The hero carries on shopping downtown with a choice of two stores to investigate.
• Verging Records is of course a pun on Virgin Records (established in 1972).
• The jewellers, Epiphany's, is a reference to the famous jewellery and silverware store Tiffany & Co. (usually referred to as simply "Tiffany's"), which was opened in New York City in 1837 by Charles Tiffany and Teddy Young. It gained further fame through the work of fiction later adapted into the 1961 film *Breakfast at Tiffany's* (which featured Audrey Hepburn and George Peppard). **FF**

Every issue we give you **Out of the Pit** – a mini-bestiary of monsters drawn from across the world of Titan and beyond. Each illustrated creature entry is broken down into two sections: one concerns game statistics, and the other is a longer description of the creature and its special features. The statistics* listed for each creature are: SKILL, STAMINA, Attacks, Weapon Used, Habitat, Number Encountered, Type, Reaction and Intelligence.

Given the imminent release of Jonathan Green's new epic *Stormslayer*, in this issue, we present a collection of coruscating creatures of conflict that have crawled out of the nearest meteorological conflagration:

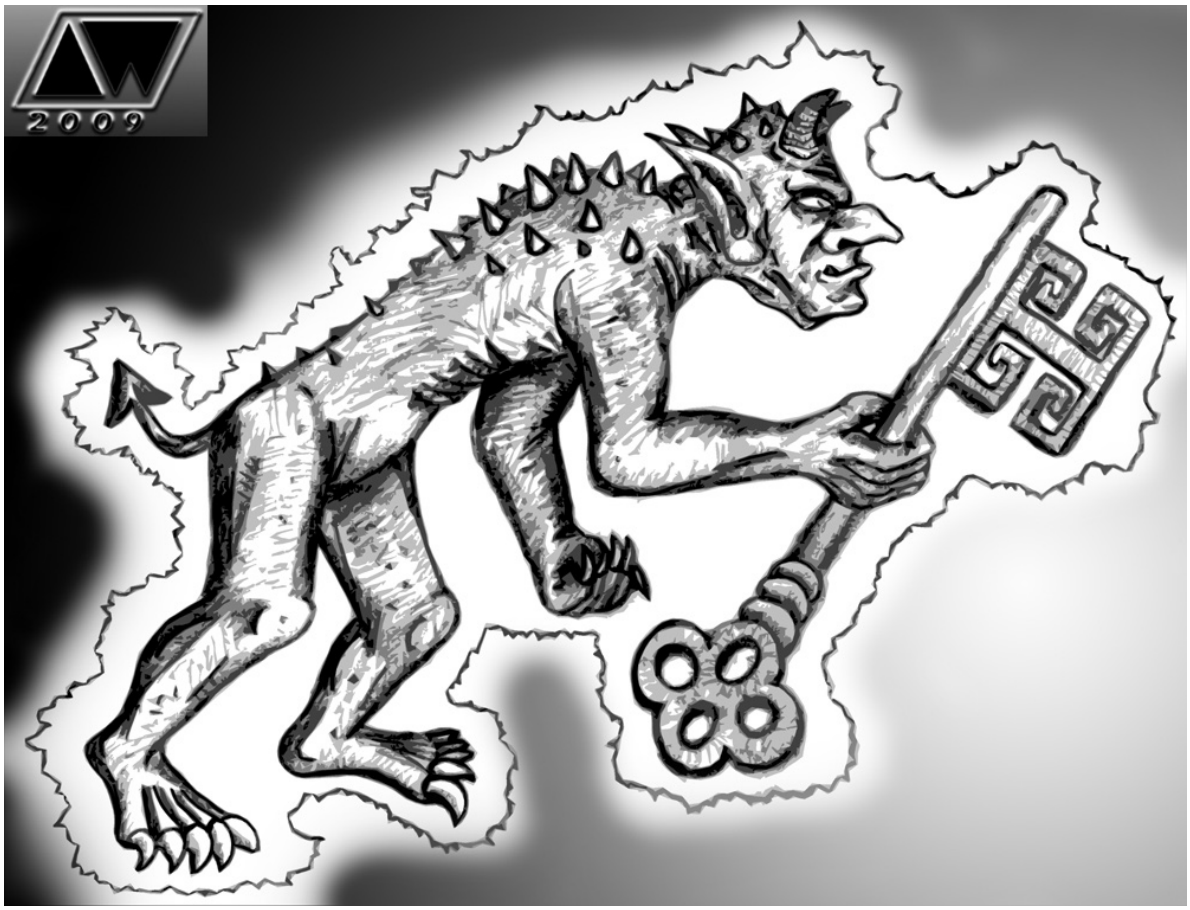
RIDERS OF THE STORMS

On distant Elemental Planes, where Air conjoins with Water, lies a region of never-ending storm – boiling black clouds, random blasts of lightning, and a continuous, ominous boom of rolling thunder. Here, some priests say, lies the palace of Sukh the Storm god, and his attendant deities, such as Thyra Migurn, goddess of Lightning (when she is not on Titan tormenting lone adventurers – see *Siege of Sardath*: 33), or Electron, Lord of the Storm (see the Thunder Beast entry below). Ruled over by these gods are an electrical host of elemental creatures of varying voltages. Sometimes they appear on Titan voluntarily when they are entrusted with a mission by their overlords, or summoned by respected priests of Sukh. Sometimes though, their presence is involuntary, perhaps as a result of exile as punishment for crimes committed, or being accidentally sucked down an inter-planar wormhole. Regardless, they often remain, and now patrol the skies of Titan as riders of the storms! Four such beings are presented below…

LIGHTNING CREATURE
by **Barnaby Holmes**

SKILL: 7
STAMINA: 10
Attacks: 1
Weapon Used: Large Claw
Habitat: Mountains
Number Encountered: 1
Type: Elemental
Reaction: Hostile
Intelligence: Average

*An explanation of all these statistics (except "Weapon Used") can be found in the original *Out of the Pit* (p.15/11-13. See also *Warlock* #7 p.10-11). An explanation of the "Weapon Used" category can be found in *Dungeoneer* (p.153-156 and 164-165).



LIGHTNINGCREATURES are powerful beings that dwell only at the storm-lashed tops of the highest mountains of Titan. Made up of pure elemental energy, they assume a vaguely humanoid shape for most of the time, though they can transform themselves into other shapes if need be. They are related to Air Elementals, it is thought, and are sometimes found in their company. Storm Giants sometimes use Lightning Creatures as guardians of their cloud-based citadels. Lightning Creatures are however most commonly found on their own.

Lightning Creatures need the power of thunderstorms to keep them supplied with energy, and must be struck by lightning at least once a month to survive. The power of the bolt is stored in their crackling bodies, ready to be unleashed at a moment's notice. Because of this, fighting a Lightning Creature can prove to be very perilous, as hitting one with a sword, or any other metal weapon, will result in a flash of sparks and partial electrocution.

If a successful hit is scored with a metal weapon, the Lightning Creature will take one point of STAMINA damage, but their attacker will take two STAMINA points damage and the metal weapon will be buckled and blackened, becoming all but useless. If the creature hits it scores a normal 2 STAMINA points of damage, except if its opponent is wearing metal armour, in which case it causes 4 STAMINA points damage! Throwing a weapon at the creature will require a *Test of Skill*, by rolling less than or equal to a SKILL score on two dice. If successful, the weird monster will short out, causing it 5 points of STAMINA damage, though the weapon will be lost. Similarly, throwing a bucket of water over it (which has the same effect), will also require a successful *Test Your Skill* roll. Few adventurers carry buckets of water up to the tops of mountains however!

Some adventurers have reported encounters with a rarer type of Lightning Creature, which can also shoot brief flashes of electricity at their opponents. After the normal attack has been made, a roll of 1 or 2 on one die means the Lightning Creature has zapped its opponent for a further 2 points of electric shock damage!

[Originally appeared in *Warlock* #11 p.20]

LIGHTNING SPRITE

by **Jonathan Green**

SKILL: 7
STAMINA: 4
Attacks: 1
Weapon Used: Small Claw
Habitat: Hills
Number Encountered: 1-3
Type: Elemental
Reaction: Hostile
Intelligence: Average

LIGHTNING SPRITES are true children of the storm – curious and capricious creatures whose tiny, vaguely humanoid forms fizzle with electricity. They are especially associated with hills and other upland areas, where they ride lightning bolts down to the ground near isolated cottages and hamlets. Fizzing and sparking, they leap jerkily towards their victims – usually anyone foolish enough to be caught out in such a storm – attracted to any metal objects their victim may possess.

Anyone winning an Attack Round and successfully striking a Lightning Sprite with a metal weapon will inflict damage as normal, but will also suffer the loss of 2 STAMINA points themselves, as they receive a sharp electric shock for their troubles. However, anyone attacking a Lightning Sprite with a wooden or non-metallic weapon, or even with their bare fists, will not suffer this electrical shock damage for every successful hit on the creature.

It is not known why Lightning Sprites are attracted to small metal objects, but some witnesses have reported seeing the creatures 'playing' with things like keys or coins, causing

Art: © Andrew Wright, 2009

them to shoot sparks or glow white-hot. Whether the Sprites discard these objects after playing with them, or instead hoard them in tree-hollows and animal burrows is open to conjecture. Do not be surprised however, if after a big storm you see the local serfs head into the hills armed with spades and picks, to look for treasure!

[Originally appeared in *Howl of the Werewolf*: 198]

STORM SPIRIT
by **Paul Mason and Steve Williams**

SKILL: 10
STAMINA: 6
Attacks: 1
Weapon Used: Large Claw
Habitat: Sea
Number Encountered: 1-6
Type: Elemental
Reaction: Hostile
Intelligence: Average

Any mariner worth their salt knows the storms that rage across the seas and oceans of Titan are best avoided if possible. This is not just because of their power to wreck ships, but also because the black banks of clouds that race across the sky may harbour the dreaded STORM SPIRITS, fierce elemental creatures who consider themselves the offspring of the raging tempests. Storm Spirits appear as crackling electrical humanoids of pure energy. Despite being wingless, they are capable of flying at terrifying speed, racing down to attack the crew of ships trapped at the mercy of a storm.

These beings strike with talons like coruscating barbs of electricity. In addition, during combat they can unleash up to two energy bolts of lightning at any target. These bolts hit on a roll of 1-4 on one die, and do 2 STAMINA points of damage per hit.

Anyone foolish enough to strike a Storm Spirit with a metal weapon will suffer 1 STAMINA point of damage themselves for every successful Attack Round, as the being's life-power arcs back through the weapon and into its bearer. An adventurer attacking a Storm Spirit with a wooden weapon such as a club or a staff suffers no such penalties.

Storm Spirits may be encountered in a storm at any latitude across Titan, but tend to prefer the boiling hurricanes and thick monsoons of the tropics. As a result they are most numerous in more southerly marine areas like the Ocean of Tempests, the Sea of Pearls, the Black Ocean, the Inland Sea, and the Gulf of Shamuz.

[Originally appeared in *The Riddling Reaver* p.77]

THUNDER BEAST
by **Andrew Chapman and Martin Allen**

SKILL: 9
STAMINA: 6
Attacks: 1
Weapon Used: Trident (as per Spear)
Habitat: Plains
Number Encountered: 1-3
Type: Elemental
Reaction: Hostile
Intelligence: High

From the rolling lowlands that form the Pikestaff Plain in north-eastern Khul (or perhaps not - see the Gundobad article in this issue), come harrowing tales of the creatures of torment known only as THUNDER BEASTS. Appearing as ferocious-looking supernatural beings of living flame, they descend to the ground on forks of lightning, setting fire to the surround grass (thus being responsible for many of the region's savage brush-fires) and waylaying any unfortunates who have been caught out in the open. With a roar like thunder they will leap forward and attack their victims with tri-

dents of pure electricity.

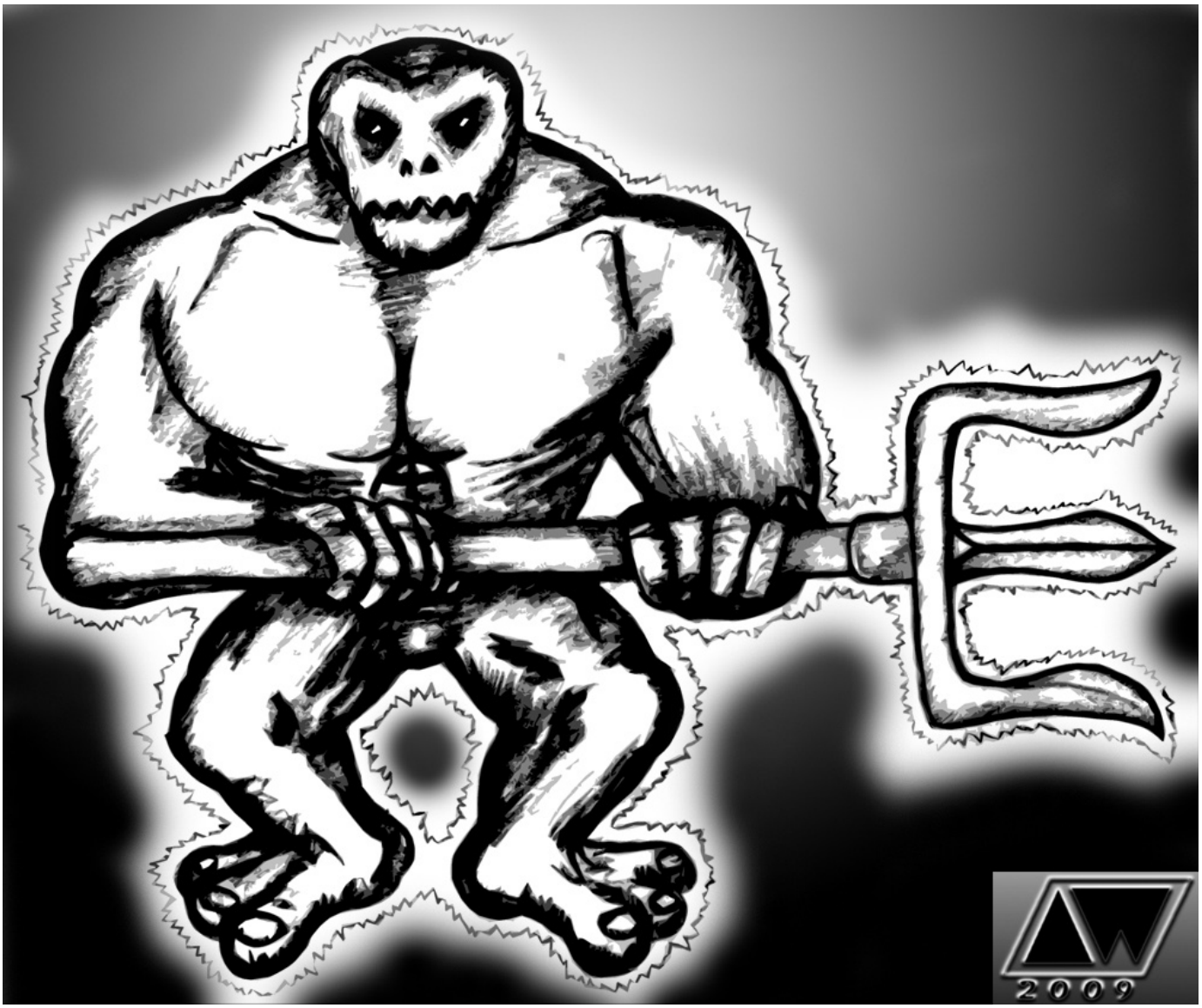
If three Thunder Beasts are encountered, only two will fight, while the third and largest creature stands back and watches the proceedings. If its companions are defeated, the remaining Thunder Beast will reveal itself as Electron, Lord of the Storm, a minor weather deity of these parts. Electron will be impressed by his victim's prowess and offer them a chance to live, usually in the form of a riddle or conundrum.

If they guess the wrong answer, Electron will vaporize them with several hundred million volts of electricity, have a good laugh at their expense, and fly back into the clouds. If they guess the right answer, they will be allowed to live, and perhaps even receive a gift. For example, during the Trial of Kingship practiced by the noble house of the city-state of Gundobad, the Warlock-Prince Lothar guessed correctly and was rewarded with a Bolt of Decimation – a tiny metallic bolt of lightning that weighed no more than a feather (hurled against a creature during combat however, and the Bolt would cause its instant annihilation, regardless of how many STAMINA points it possessed). At least, this is the tale told by Lothar when asked about the bolt-shaped charm that hangs from around his neck!

Suffice to say, when fierce storms boil out of the northern mountains of Krill Garnash, and sweep down across the Pikestaff Plain, the local goat-herders and nomadic tribes know that their only option is to seek cover!

[Originally appeared in *Clash of the Princes – The Warlock's Way*: 23, 201, 314, 395, 429, 491]

Addendum:
We've run out of space, but there are certainly plenty of other creatures from Titan canon with some similarities to those presented here. From *Out of the Pit* for example, we have Storm Giants (60/143-144), the Fetch (49/112-114), and the Will-o'-the-Wisp (119-120/318-319). Related to the latter two is the mysterious Cave Wisp (*Revenge of the Vampire*: 14, 204, 307, 374). Others include lightning-breathing Blue Dragons (*Warlock* #4 – *The Dervish Stone*: p27 (19), p28 (31), p29 (37), p31 (49, 54), p32 (60), p33 (68, 73), p35 (80), p48 (182, 199). See also *Stealer of Souls*: 111, 214, 261), which may or may not be the same as Stormdrakes (*Night Dragon*: 62, 122, 155). Lastly, from *Titan*, we have obscure references to Lightning and Storm Demons (72/163), both types of which are Greater Demons in the Secondus tier in the hierarchy of the Pit. **FF**

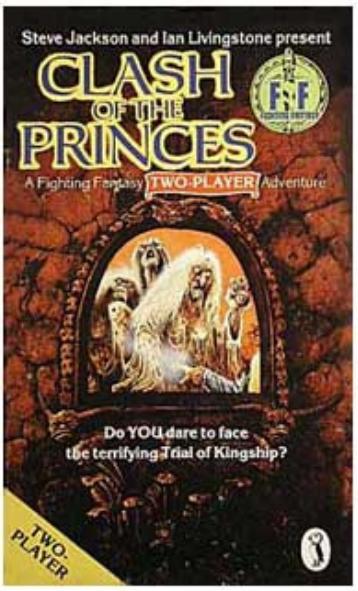


CAN'T FIND GUNDOBAD ON A MAP? MAYBE WE CAN HELP...

Have you ever wondered where the lands of *Clash of the Princes* lie? In this article, we explore these wild, dangerous lands, and we think we have come up with a likely answer. Are you ready to join **Warren McGuire** as guide in our hunt for the location of the golden city of Gundobad?

Introduction

Clash of the Princes, by Andrew Chapman and Martin Allen, was the first and only two-player adventure in the *Fighting Fantasy* series. Published on the 1st of August, 1986, it consisted of two volumes, *The Warlock's Way* and *The Warrior's Way*, illustrated by John Blanche. The events of *Clash of the Princes* begin in the golden city of Gundobad and unfold in the wilds to the north of the city-state, and involve a Trial of Kingship between Prince Lothar and Prince Clovis, the two sons of the ruler of Gundobad, King Gunderbock XVI. These lands, which are detailed in a full colour map by Dave Andrews on the inside front cover of each volume,[1] are described as follows:


Steve Jackson and Ian Livingstone present
CLASH OF THE PRINCES
A Fighting Fantasy TWO-PLAYER Adventure
Do YOU dare to face the terrifying Trial of Kingship?
TWO-PLAYER

"The city-state of Gundobad, though lying in the centre of the great empire of the Pasha Vulfolaic the Vicious – an exceptionally rapacious emperor – still selects its own rulers by means of the ancient methods handed down through the aeons. Tradition has it that the first ruler of Gundobad, King Ossil the harmful, had an enormous crown forged of iron and studded with a thousands blue gems, which were stolen for him from the Plain of Ice in the Third Hell by his Faerie wife."[2]

Three months after the release of Clash of the Princes, Titan – The Fighting Fantasy World, edited by Marc Gascoigne, was published. In this ultimate guide to the Fighting Fantasy world, the planet of Titan was revealed in all its glory, in the form of maps, histories, accounts of the chief races, allies and enemies, and discussion of everyday life in this perilous world. Titan brought together information from all of the fantasy gamebooks published prior to its release, except for Talisman of Death which was set in the world of Orb, and included details from those gamebooks which were in the production pipeline, up to Crypt of the Sorcerer (released on the 9th of April 1987). In it were detailed three continents, Allansia, The Old World and Khul, as well as four oceans and numerous islands, and for the first time we learned the locations of places like Scorpion Swamp, Gallantaria, Atlantis and Vatos.

But one location which didn't appear in *Titan* was Gundobad. There isn't a single mention of the Golden City, of Ossil the Harmful, or of the extremely rapacious emperor Vulfolaic in the whole volume. None of the places on the *Clash of the Princes* map (Gundobad included) can be found on the maps of Allansia, The Old World, Khul, or the other far flung reaches of Titan. It's almost as if *Clash of the Princes* had never existed. The absence of Gundobad from *Titan* is, however, consistent with the odd status *Clash of the Princes* seems to have had in the history of *Fighting Fantasy*. The two-player gamebook set doesn't seem to have been in print for very long (perhaps only one print run), and it was never listed along with the other *Fighting Fantasy* products at the front of each gamebook.[3] If you blinked in 1986, you might (like several of us) have missed the existence of *Clash of the Princes* entirely! Until, that is, *Fighting Fantasy* appeared on the internet, or you read "The Fighting Fantasy Collection" section in the 25th Anniversary Edition of *The Warlock of Firetop Mountain*, which was published in August 2007.

So the ultimate guide to the *Fighting Fantasy* world has nothing to say about Gundobad and the lands around it. Does that mean that Gundobad isn't on Titan? Or is it possible that Gundobad is on Titan, but that it was forgotten when Steve, Ian and Marc Gascoigne put the *Fighting Fantasy* world together? We certainly know which option we prefer, and in this article we explore the possibility that Gundobad is, in fact, on Titan. Examining a range of evidence, we feel that one area in particular stands out as the most likely location of the lands of *Clash of the Princes* in the *Fighting Fantasy* world.

Andrew Chapman's Message

Of course, we're not the first people to suggest that Gundobad should be located on Titan. These lands have intrigued *Fighting Fantasy* fans over the years, and, on the principle that absence of evidence is not the same as evidence of absence, the general feeling seems to have been that the lands of *Clash of the Princes* are on Titan somewhere.[4] The quest to know where Gundobad might lie led Daniel Williams, one time moderator of the *Rebuilding Titan* Yahoo! discussion group,

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1. Although Dave Andrews isn't credited anywhere in the two volumes, the map is signed "DA" and is very similar in style to Dave's other maps in *Masks of Mayhem* and *Creature of Havoc*.
2. *Clash of the Princes: The Trial of Kingship*.
3. Although it was mentioned in *Warlock* magazine, particularly Issue 11, p.10.
4. See, for example, the Yahoo! discussion groups *Rebuilding Titan*, *Fightingfantasy2* and *Titan Rebuilding*.

to contact Andrew Chapman himself about the issue in 2001. Andrew very kindly replied as follows:[5]

"I don't think I was even aware of Titan when I wrote Clash of the Princes *and was certainly never consulted by anyone about it. I have no problem with Gundobad being situated in Titan and you may place it there with my blessing."*

Great as it was to have the opinions of one of the authors of *Clash of the Princes* on the matter, this was hardly the convincing evidence that *Fighting Fantasy* fans might have been hoping for. But at least it was something. So if Gundobad is in Titan, where might it lie? Is there any evidence, in the books or in the map, which might help us to nail down a location? In the next section, we review what evidence there is and find that one location in Titan in particular seems to bear a striking resemblance to the lands of *Clash of the Princes*.

Evidence for the Location of Gundobad

Gundobad is an ancient city-state, ruled over by a king. At the time of *Clash of the Princes*, it is ruled by the old King Gunderbock XVI. Although Gundobad lies "in the centre of the great empire of the Pasha Vulfolaic the Vicious", it still selects its own rulers, as it has done throughout its long history. At some earlier period in the history of the area, there was an "Old Kingdom",[6] but whether this was before or after the time of King Ossil is unknown. In the last years of the reign of King Gunderbock XVI, the lands to the north of Gundobad are wild and dangerous, inhabited by Druidic sects, murderous inn-keepers, fell witch-hunters, unscrupulous slave-traders, and by all manner of evil and chaotic creature.

The map accompanying *Clash of the Princes* details these wild lands, since it is here that the adventures of Lothar and Clovis take place. Immediately to the north of the city lies an extensive area of broken woodland, through which the River Scamder flows in a westerly direction. The Scamder is crossed by a number of bridges, and to the northwest of Gundobad the Scamder spreads out over a flat plain to form the shallow Lake of Death. Further north, the forests give way to moor and marshland, before rising into the hilly wilderness of the Northern Waste. The Northern Waste, the heart of which is a parched desert, is bounded to the west and north by the Great Ocean. At the south-western edge of the Northern Waste lies the cityport of Kalamdar, in the corner of a square bay (with the coast stretching westwards and northwards from it), from which ships sail out into the Great Ocean. Further to the north lie the small Kingdom of Peleus and the Isle of Orcmoot. It is not clear whether these places are on the shores of the Northern Waste as shown in the Clash of the Princes map, or whether they are further north still, beyond the area covered by the map, since the Kingdom of Peleus is six or seven days sail from Kalamdar.[7]

This much we know about the lands north of Gundobad. But of their wider geographical setting and their relationship with the world of Titan, *Clash of the Princes* has nothing to say. Can we find anywhere on Titan which would fit reasonably well with what we know about Gundobad and the surrounding lands?

Where on Titan?

The lands of Titan consist of three main continents, numerous islands, and an "Unknown Land" in the far south.[8] The three continents, Allansia, The Old World and Khul, were originally part of one larger continent, Irritaria, which was split asunder at the time of the sinking of the lost land of Atlantis.[9] Where in all these wide lands might we find an area which fits with the geography, history and culture of Gundobad?

A number of *Fighting Fantasy* fans over the years have mooted the theory that Gundobad should be located in the Unknown Land, in the far south of Titan.[10] This Unknown Land is certainly intriguing, lying as it does on the edge of the map and on the edge of our knowledge of Titan, and there is an obvious appeal in 'discovering' who or what may be found there. But there are problems with locating Gundobad in the Unknown Land, however. Firstly, nothing is known about the Unknown Land, as its name implies. It is not known whether it is inhabited, or by whom, nor is anything known about its geography other than the part which creeps over the edge of the Titan map – and the coastline of that part of the Unknown Land and the coastline of the map in *Clash of the Princes* aren't at all similar. Secondly, we do not even know whether the Unknown Land is habitable, considering its extreme southerly location – for all we know it could be an inhospitable icy wilderness. So although the Unknown Land is one possible location for Gundobad, we can't help feeling that it doesn't quite fit the bill.

Another possibility is that Gundobad lay somewhere in the old continent of Irritaria, which was destroyed by the gods. Since we know so little about the geography, history or politics of Irritaria, it is impossible to evaluate such a hypothesis. Irritaria was destroyed over one thousand years before the period in which all the other *Fighting Fantasy* gamebooks are set (most typically in the 280s After Chaos). There is no reason to believe that the time period of *Clash of the Princes* is any different, and it certainly doesn't portray a world which is any less advanced technologically than the other gamebooks, which it might be expected to do were it set in Irritaria. So again we feel that this hypothesis, interesting though it might be, doesn't take us very far in our quest to locate Gundobad on Titan.

Further examination of the maps in *Titan – The Fighting Fantasy World* suggests one intriguing similarity between the lands of *Clash of the Princes* and the world of Titan which we think might be worth pursuing – the similarity of the names Kalamdar and Kalagar. As discussed above, Kalamdar is a city-port to the north-northwest of Gundobad. Kalagar is likewise a port, this time in the far north of Khul. Given that

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5. *Rebuilding Titan*, post 503, 21st January, 2001.
6. *The Warrior's Way*: 195.
7. *The Warlock's Way*: 28, 227.
8. *Titan – The Fighting Fantasy World*: 10-11/12-13.
9. *Titan – The Fighting Fantasy World*: 32-33/58-61, 112-113/260-263.
10. See post 451 (6th December, 2000) and replies on the *Rebuilding Titan* Yahoo! group for example.

the only difference between the two names are the sequences -md- and -g-, it is not a huge stretch of the imagination to suggest that they could be alternative variants of the same name. If that was the only similarity between the lands of *Clash of the Princes* and the area around Kalagar in northern Khul, it probably wouldn't be enough to persuade us that this area might be a good location for Gundobad and its surrounding lands. But the similarities don't stop there. When we compare the geography of the two areas, they are, in fact, remarkably similar.

The map in *Clash of the Princes* shows that Kalamdar lies at the corner of a bay (in the Great Ocean), with coasts stretching west and north from it. The coast to the north of Kalamdar turns a corner eastwards so that the Northern Waste is bounded by the Great Ocean in the north. Kalagar also lies at the corner of a bay (in the Sea of Silver), with coasts stretching westwards and northwards in the same fashion. Although the coast which stretches northwards bulges outwards somewhat, it too turns eastwards, forming a square of land which is similar in shape to the Northern Wastes in the *Clash of the Princes* map. Even though the far north coast in the Khul map doesn't appear to stretch as far eastwards as the far north coast in the *Clash of the Princes* map, the layout of the coasts and positions of Kalamdar and Kalagar are very similar indeed.

Are Kalamdar and Kalagar the Same Place?

Although the similarity of the names and geographical settings of Kalamdar and Kalagar are very suggestive, we actually know very little indeed about either place. In The Warlock's Way, Lothar may pass through the city-port of Kalamdar, but other than him arranging passage on a merchant ship sailing into the Great Ocean, we learn nothing else about it.[11] We know a little more about Kalagar, but not much. Under the rule of Khan Gyorgir, the empire of Kabesh stretched from Tak in the south to Kalagar in the north.[12] Kalagar survived the Spawning of Chaos in Khul, as its presence on the map of Khul in *Titan – The Fighting Fantasy World* testifies,[13] and in the third century After Chaos it found itself at one end of a trade-route across the continent to Ximoran, via Ashkyos and Djiretta, along which metals, furs and ivory pass.[14] Other than that we only have snippets of information on Kalagar. In Masks of Mayhem, the ruler of Arion may encounter a farmer with two Kalagarian Ridgeback guard dogs,[15] and in Phantoms of Fear the Elf shaman Eldenurin may meet travellers from Kalagar who are hoping "to escape the doom which the Kalagarian prophet Vanator has foretold for the world".[16]

So although there is no additional evidence which suggests a connection between Kalamdar and Kalagar, there is nothing which contradicts it either. We are left with the similarity between the names and the geographies of the two places.

Of course, the maps in *Clash of the Princes* and in *Titan*, close though they might be, are not exactly the same. But the fact that the coasts on the two maps don't quite match up isn't a very great problem, since it is often the case that *Fighting Fantasy* maps of the same area are at odds with each other in terms of the exact proportions of the lands being detailed (compare, for example, the maps of the Inland Sea in *Seas of Blood* and in *Titan*, of northwest Allansia in *Out of the Pit* and in *Titan*, and of the lands north of Arion in *Masks of Mayhem* and in *Titan*).

But doesn't the map in *Titan* indicate that the lands around Kalagar are rather flat and featureless, lacking in both forest cover and waterways? Indeed it does. But this is not necessarily the problem it seems to be at first glance. *Titan – The Fighting Fantasy World* was first published in 1986. Other than gamebooks which were in the pipeline, *Titan* obviously couldn't include information which appeared in later *Fighting Fantasy* publications. But this didn't stop later authors placing their adventures in the world of Titan and adding detail to the maps of Allansia, The Old World and Khul. Just to give an example: *Titan* gives no indication that the lands of south-west Khul are a mishmash of tribal lands, city-states, forests, marshes, plains and mountains.[17] Instead, the lands south of the River Swordflow seem to consist of plains in the north and hills and mountains in the south, with no sign of Gorak, Kazan or Zamarra. When Luke Sharp wrote *Chasms of Malice*, *Daggers of Darkness* and *Fangs of Fury*, he chose to fill in the detail for this area, even though this involved significant changes to the geography as detailed on the *Titan* map. The same was done by, for example, Jonathan Green for Ruddlestone, Jim Bambra and Stephen Hand for Gallantaria, and Keith Phillips for the Forest of Night in Allansia. It seems that the maps in *Titan* were not, and were never intended to be, the last word on the geography of these lands, but were, rather, templates to which extra detail could be added when necessary. The addition of the lands of Gundobad to the map of Khul is not, as a result, an issue just because there is no sign of them on the Khul map in *Titan*. Of course, *Clash of the Princes* was published three months before the release of *Titan*, so the situation is not quite the same as for the later *Fighting Fantasy* gamebooks, but nevertheless the lack of detail on this part of the Khul map is no reason to reject the equation of Kalagar and its hinterland with Kalamdar and the lands of Gundobad.

Other Evidence for Placing Gundobad in Khul

As was discussed above, Gundobad is described as "lying in the centre of the great empire of the Pasha Vulfolaic the Vicious". Pashas were high-ranking individuals in the Turkic Ottoman Empire and, interestingly, "Pasha" isn't the only connection between Fighting Fantasy and the Turks of the Ottoman Empire and central Asia. In *Daggers of Darkness*, the usurping ruler of Kazan is the Vizier Chingiz, and the title "Vizier" was given to high-ranking politicians in the Islamic world, including the Ottoman Empire. Indeed, the land of Kazan and many of the names of the peoples and places in *Daggers of Darkness* take their inspiration from the Oghuz

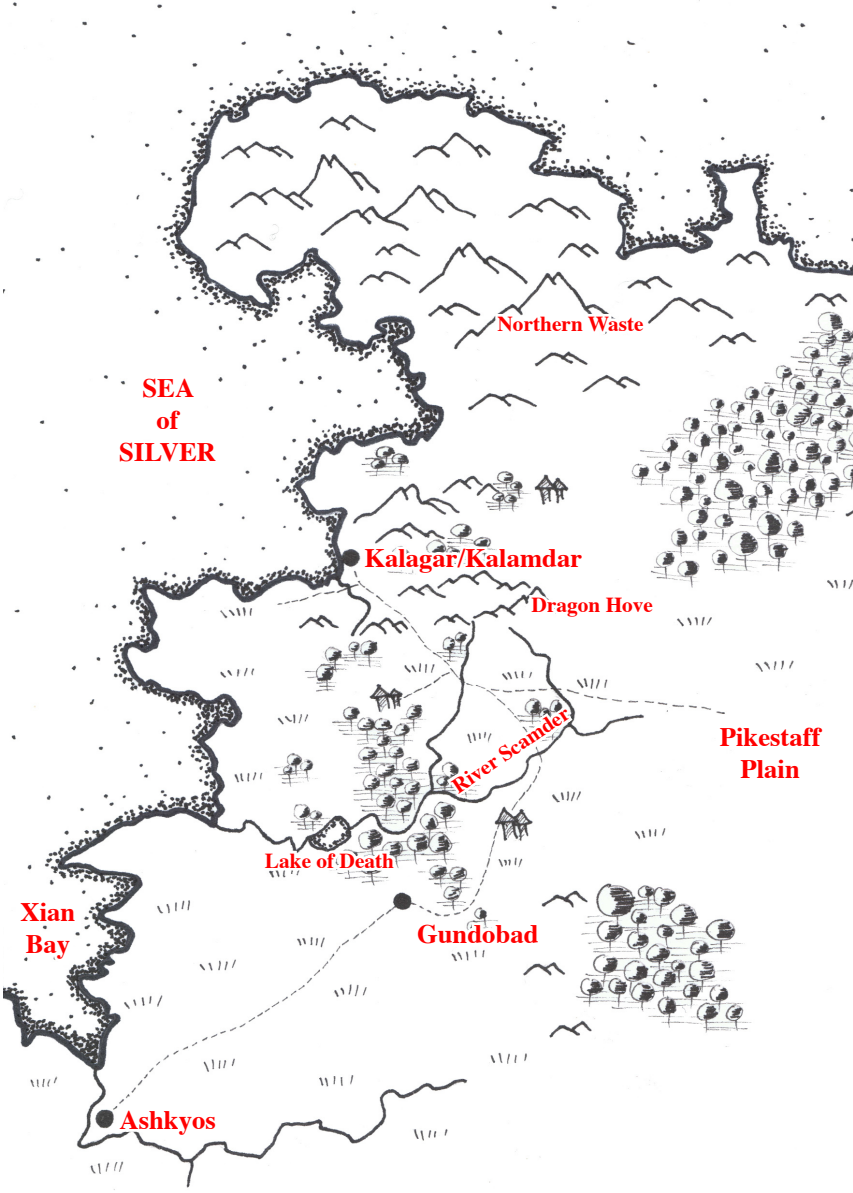
11. *The Warlock's Way*: 227.
12. *Titan – The Fighting Fantasy World*: 38/74.
13. *Titan – The Fighting Fantasy World*: 23/37.
14. *Titan – The Fighting Fantasy World*: 123/290.
15. *Masks of Mayhem*: 396.
16. *Phantoms of Fear*: 59.
17. *Titan – The Fighting Fantasy World*: 23/37

Turks of central Asia who migrated to Asia Minor in the 10th century AD, ultimately giving rise to the Ottoman Empire and the Republic of Turkey.

Another title associated with the Turks (and the Mongolians), especially in their central Asian homeland, is "Khan". This title is also found in *Fighting Fantasy*, again in Khul – prior to the Spawning of Chaos, Khan Gyorgir ruled a vast empire, centred on Kabesh in the middle of the Dark Continent.

So there is a definite association between the continent of Khul and the tribes of the central Asian steppes. Placing Gundobad in Khul fits very nicely with this, and might lead us to envisage a historical connection between the empire of Pasha Vulfolaic and the horse-nomads of the central Khulian plains.

In the map opposite, we have attempted to show how the lands of *Clash of the Princes* might fit into the map of Khul as based on the map drawn by Steve Luxton in *Titan*. As you can see, the fit is really rather good, and it fills in an area of the Khulian map which we know very little about. The road which runs southwest from Gundobad in the *Clash of the Princes* map appears to point directly towards Ashkyos, and the road running east-west between Kalamdar and Gundobad points in the direction of Pikestaff Plain and the settlement of Fallow Dale.[18] Since Gundobad lies at the centre of Pasha Vulfolaic's empire, we can assume that this empire stretches from at least the Battlegrounds or the borders of Ashkyos to the large forest to the north of Pikestaff Plain, a vast area of rolling grasslands which would be ideal for a latter day equivalent of the great Khan Gyorgir.



Conclusions

So if Gundobad is anywhere on Titan, northern Khul seems like the best location, given the close similarity of the names Kalagar and Kalamdar and of the geography of the lands around. Of course, Andrew Chapman has stated that he wasn't aware of a connection between the lands of *Clash of the Princes* and Titan, so this close similarity appears to be nothing more than a happy coincidence. It would be great to know what Martin Allen, Dave Andrews, Marc Gascoigne, Steve Luxton, or even Ian and Steve thought about the matter (if any of you are reading, please do let us know!).

But might there actually be more to the matter than chance? Might it be possible that Kalagar and Kalamdar were intended to be the same place, but, as a result of an indirect chain of communication or of mis-remembered detail, *Clash of the Princes* and *Titan* ended up a little different? Perhaps one of the following scenarios might explain the close similarity of Kalagar and Kalamdar as being more than accidental.

It is quite likely that when *Clash of the Princes* was in preparation the world of Titan had already been created,[19] and perhaps the continents had been mapped out in rough form. If this was the case, perhaps they inspired the layout of the lands around Kalamdar and Gundobad, at least for one of the people involved in *Clash of the Princes* (i.e. Martin Allen or Dave Andrews).

Or perhaps the editors of *Titan – The Fighting Fantasy World* put together what they knew about the three continents at an early stage in the development of the lands of Gundobad so that the details they did include were not quite what ultimately appeared in *Clash of the Princes*. Or maybe the editors of *Titan* didn't have a copy of *Clash of the Princes* to hand but they remembered some of the details about it. "What was the name of that place again? Kaladar? Kalamar? Kalagar? I think it was Kalagar, and it was on the coast, which, you might remember, looked a bit like this…".

Whether by accident or design, the only place in Titan which is remotely similar to the lands of *Clash of the Princes* is the area around Kalagar in northern Khul. Not only are the names Kalagar and Kalamdar quite similar, but the coasts of the two areas are nearly identical. With Andrew Chapman's blessing, we suggest that this is exactly where *Clash of the Princes* is set, although we'll never be sure until someone else involved in its creation or the creation of the world of Titan breaks their silence. Over to you, Martin Allen, Dave Andrews, Marc Gascoigne, Steve Luxton, Ian Livingstone and Steve Jackson… **FF**

Map: © Alexander Ballingall, 2009

[18] *Masks of Mayhem*: Map.
[19] So, for example, the world of Titan is mentioned in the Background section of *Sword of the Samurai*, which was published in April 1986

Everything I Really Need to Know I Learnt from Reading *Fighting Fantasy* Gamebooks

Schools have their uses, but there are some things they just can't teach you, which can only be learned by experience. One of the wonderful things about *Fighting Fantasy* books is that they allow you to vicariously experience all sorts of things you're never likely to go through in real life, enabling you to learn plenty of new things without all the hardship, exertion, unpleasantness and death you'd normally have to go through to gain those insights. Here is the first instalment of a series in which **Ed Jolley** looks into some of the wisdom that can be gleaned from the *Fighting Fantasy* range.

The Warlock of Firetop Mountain

"Zagor! Huuh! What is he killed for? Absolutely nuthin'!"
Seriously, what's he done to merit death? Let's see, the 'Rumours' section indicates that he wears gloves and uses playing cards. Well, that might make him a bit inept at shuffling and dealing, but it scarcely justifies disintegrating him with a convenient magical artefact and setting up a continuity error forty-nine books down the line, now does it? Admittedly, the expanded version in *Warlock* magazine does go into a little more detail. He provides accommodation for some of the more 'unsavoury' types of non-human (there goes the neighbourhood), and the crops are failing, which must be his fault, right? I'm surprised nobody claims to have been turned into a newt (but got better). Still, the people living nearby say he's Evil and probably up to no good, and for our hero, that's reason enough to invade Ira—sorry, to track Zagor down and kill him. For the time being, at least.

Ian Livingstone
The Forest of Doom
An original fantasy adventure in which YOU are the hero! Complete with combat system, monster encounters and score sheet
Fighting Fantasy Gamebook

Moral: Name-calling and gossip-mongering can have long-term harmful effects. Check the reliability of your information before acting on it.

The Citadel of Chaos

Balthus Dire's not exactly the sharpest dagger in the Knifey-Knifey set, is he? He goes to all the effort of having a combination lock fitted to his study door so as not to be bothered by assassins (and perhaps also to have somewhere he can get away from his quick-tempered and demanding wife), but then he lets the combination be published in a book for the local library. Not only that, but he also allows a biographer to write about his one big weakness (well, other than his vulnerability to being carved up with sharp weapons, but that's such a common problem it scarcely warrants mentioning), and orders a copy of that book for the library, too. It therefore comes as no great surprise when an impudent (yet far from illiterate) peasant breaks into the study and gives Balthus a lethal suntan.

Moral: Be careful not to leave confidential data lying around where just anyone can find it.

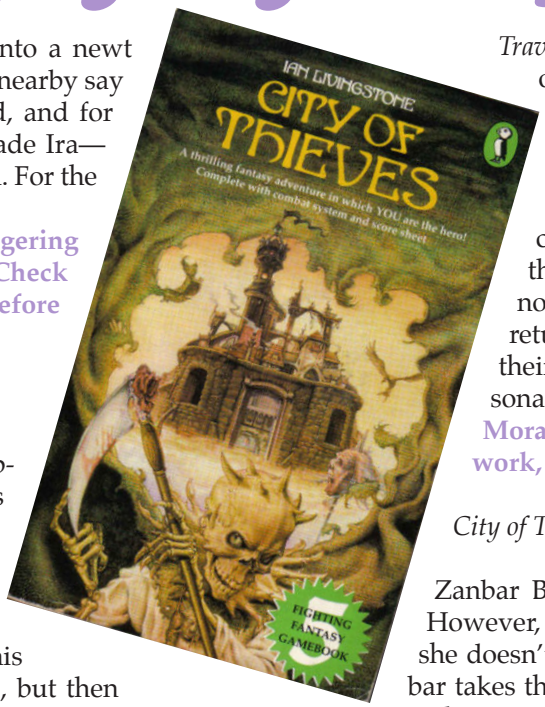
The Forest of Doom

The Hill Trolls are getting ready to invade the Dwarven village of Stonebridge, but the Dwarves aren't mobilising for battle because King Gillibran has had his favourite hammer stolen. Rather than strive to rally the troops, he sits around moping, forlornly singing 'If I Had a Hammer', and generally acting like a powerful argument in favour of republics. Our hero saves the day, naturally, but might it not have been kinder to let natural selection run its course?

Moral: It's not wise to get overly attached to one's personal possessions.

Starship Traveller

The planet Culematter is so overpopulated that the authorities have resorted to periodic cullings to reduce strain on the world's resources (which does beg the question of why they build android police rather than employing some of the natives). When Captain YOU of the starship *Traveller* beams down with an away team of nonentities, they are mistaken for locals and scheduled for a cull. The Captain attempts to contact the *Traveller*, and thus discovers that by a most fortuitous coincidence, the communicator operates on a frequency that jams the androids' circuits. With their captors now immobilised, the team are able to return to the ship unharmed and resume their search for a crew member with a personality.


Ian Livingstone
City of Thieves
A thrilling fantasy adventure in which YOU are the hero! Complete with combat system and score sheet
Fighting Fantasy Gamebook

Moral: If you're likely to be delayed at work, call home and let the folks know.

City of Thieves

Zanbar Bone wants to marry Mirelle Carralif. However, her father is dead set against it, and she doesn't appear overly keen to elope. So Zanbar takes the somewhat unorthodox step of sending her dogs as a token of his passion. Lots and lots of dogs. Mirelle is not impressed, especially when they prove inadequately house-trained, and start savaging her friends and neighbours to death. And yet, while all this is

going on, just two floors down from Zanbar 'lives' a very pretty female Vampire. She's single. She shares with Zanbar the hobby of turning visiting adventurers into the undead. They're clearly made for each other. Unfortunately for Zanbar, before he realises that his 'life' is turning into a cliché from a romantic comedy, Mr Carralif decides not to bother with the restraining order and hires an adventurer to kill Zanbar and burn down his home. Now that never happened to Hugh Grant.

Moral: If she doesn't fancy you, don't keep pestering her. Are you sure you're not overlooking someone more suitable?

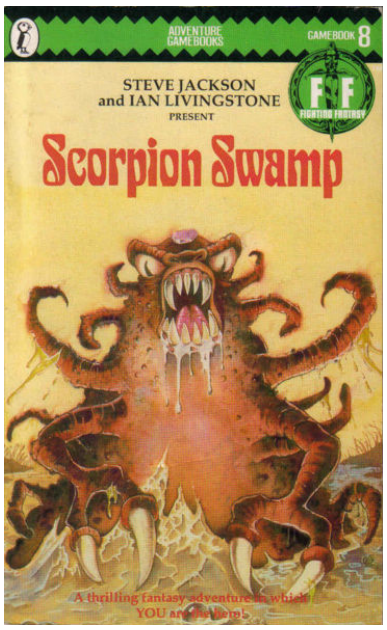
Deathtrap Dungeon

Think about the sequence of events when you and your temporary ally Throm the Barbarian are tested by the Dwarven Trialmaster. After the cobra-catching test, you have to solve an anagram, and if you fail to do so, you are not permitted to continue. If you do solve the anagram, you then have to fight a monster, and then you get to rest while Throm takes the same tests. And then comes the interesting bit. The Trialmaster reveals that Throm, too, has passed the tests, but as only one of you may go on, the two of you will have to fight to the death. Throm has no objection to this, as he got bitten during the cobra-catching, and is too delirious to recognise you as his friend. Yet, in this condition, he managed to solve an anagram? The same Throm who showed such contempt for the written word not so long ago? Clearly, Throm is what passes for an intellectual among his people, driven to hide his literacy by the gibes of his less-smart peers, and quite possibly only in Deathtrap Dungeon because he felt the need to prove his masculinity to the less bookish members of his tribe. Think of the literary discussions you might have had with him, if circumstances hadn't necessitated running him through with your trusty sword.

Moral: Don't underestimate your friends. They may have hidden talents.

Island of the Lizard King

When your exploration of the mines on Fire Island leads you to the edge of a vertical shaft with no attached ladder, rather than turning back like any sane person, you decide to see if your randomly-acquired footwear enables you to walk on walls. Amazingly enough, it does, enabling you to descend the shaft and search its bottom. There you find not the remains of several adventurers who guessed wrongly about their boots, but a rather nifty sword that should compensate for any SKILL penalties you might have picked up when



some other whim proved more ill-advised.

Moral: Don't be overcautious – sometimes taking a risk pays off.

Scorpion Swamp

Having achieved the primary objective of your quest for some non-evil wizard, you are making your way back out of the swamp, exploring in the hope of finding a route that doesn't lead through a raging inferno or past those blasted Sword Trees, and you happen across the kindly Mistress of Birds. Upon learning of why you are in the swamp, she summons an Eagle to transport you. And the stupid bird takes you back to the wrong side of the Foulbrood River, so you'll have to make your way back through the clearing with the mass of scorpions yet again. Thanks a bundle, Mistress of Birds.

Moral: Before you accept someone's assistance, make sure they know how to do the job properly.

Caverns of the Snow Witch

The adventurer who killed Zagor looked up at Firetop Mountain and concluded that it must be unscalable. The adventurer who defeated the Snow Witch is compelled to climb Firetop Mountain while suffering the effects of a Death Spell, and makes it to the top after only a quick fight with a feeble Hobgoblin and a minor stumble. Unclimbable, my foot. In some parts of Allansia you face far greater trials and worse dangers just trying to walk down a corridor.

Moral: Don't let the perceived difficulty of a challenge intimidate you. Sometimes you only find out how easy something is when you try.

House of Hell

Consider the prisoner in the second cell. He's decided that, in the event of some armed stranger turning up, he'll attempt to trick said stranger into giving him a weapon, which he can then use against his captors the next time they come along. However, unable to risk the stranger's being captured and revealing that one of the prisoners is now armed, the man will test out the weapon on the hapless fool who gives it to him. It strikes me that there is just the vaguest possibility that when the cultists next come to the cells, one of the smarter ones might find it ever so slightly suspicious that there's a strange corpse with a slit throat straight in front of the man's cell. But what do I know?

Moral: Just think that plan through one more time. You may have missed an obvious loophole. FF

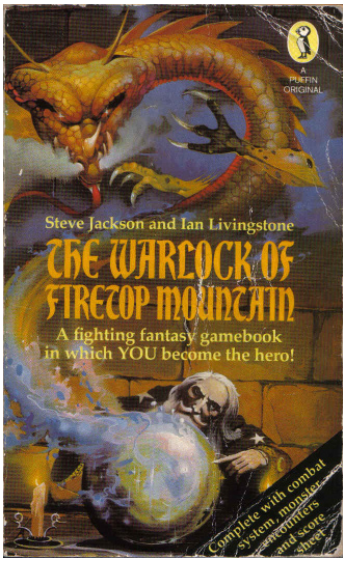
FIGHTING DANTASY

Dan revisits the Fighting Fantasy series, one gamebook at a time...

Remember reading your first *Fighting Fantasy* adventure? The desperate search for the items you need to win, the frantic dice rolls as you fight to stay in one piece mere paragraphs from your goal? **Dan Satherley** has decided to recreate those tense moments from our childhoods by working his way through the series book by book and recording his efforts as he goes.

I must've attempted this particular book a million times without success when I was a kid. Who am I kidding – I was still trying to procure Zagor's damn treasure well into my teens. Seriously. Although it was the first in the series, I found no other *Fighting Fantasy* gamebook as difficult as *The Warlock of Firetop Mountain* – except perhaps *Starship* Traveller.

The copy of the book I've got now is an early '80s edition – the back cover only lists two other gamebooks in the series, there's no "Steve Jackson & Ian Livingstone present" banner across the top, and most tellingly, a few of the instructional pages are almost falling out. Surprisingly for a second hand copy, the page where you keep all your statistics, inventory and fight notes hasn't got layers and layers of rubbed out pencil. I always hated it when you'd spend your week's pocket money at the second hand book store on a new gamebook, only to find some dickwad has done his adventure in pen.


A PUFFIN ORIGINAL
Steve Jackson and Ian Livingstone
THE WARLOCK OF FIRETOP MOUNTAIN
A fighting fantasy gamebook in which YOU become the hero!
Complete with combat system, monster encounters and score sheet

The aim of *The Warlock of Firetop Mountain* is to defeat Zagor, the Warlock of the book's title, and acquire his treasure, which is kept in a chest only accessible if you have the right combination of keys.

Anyway. I began by rolling a 10 for my SKILL level, 17 for STAMINA and eight for LUCK. Not too bad, but not exactly the best stats. I used to just give myself 12/24/12 (the maximum), but in the interests of accurate journalism (this is a column in a fanzine after all... come on!) I did things properly this time.

So to the adventure - once inside the mountain, I went west, snuck past some sleeping guards (I love how most guards you meet in the *Fighting Fantasy* world are lazy slackers) but soon came across some drunken Orcs (I also love how most Orcs you come across are drunk – except when they're guards, in which case I assume they're sleeping off killer mead hangovers).

The intro to the book claims there is one "true" way through the book, which you can do with minimal danger and effort. I most certainly did not take that way. I was attacked by a Giant Sandworm while sitting down for a feed, attacked by a Vampire while hanging out in a crypt (not sure what I expected to happen), and at one point, the book asked if I had any cheese on me.

?

On my way through the mountain I did come across a spell to neutralise Dragon breath though, which was perhaps the only right thing I did. I also managed to spend half an hour stuck in a maze, which was seriously not fun. I assume Jackson & Livingstone had several pages to fill, and decided to be complete arseholes. Mission accomplished.

I reached Zagor's, um, we'll call it a lair shall we, without any special weapons bar a Y-shaped stick, which apparently broke in my rucksack. I have a sneaking suspicion if I attempted the book again, it would break again, so I think we can assume it's useless. Luckily the dice weren't broke, and I managed to defeat Zagor with four STAMINA points left.

So, onto the chest it was. I thought alright, I've got two numbered keys, I should be sweet... temporarily forgetting the number of times I'd made it this far way back when, with more than two keys, and still failed to open the damn chest.

Turns out you need at least three to begin with, so I was screwed, and as with every single other time I've made it this far and every single other person who's made it this far without finding the right keys, I sat on the chest and wept.

So, *The Warlock of Firetop Mountain*, you win again, even in your lead villian's death, again. I'm not sure how Jackson & Livingstone managed to get the formula right on their very first book, but it's one you'll always go back to – simply because it's so freakin' difficult, without seeming impossible. It doesn't use monsters with insane SKILL levels to defeat you, nor 50/50 "if you make the wrong turn you instantly die" copouts. It's simply well put together and intriguingly arranged...

Apart from that damn maze, of course. Is there something in there you need to complete *The Warlock of Firetop Mountain*? Or is it just a royal pain in the arse?

And is Zagor the real villian here? He's just hanging out in his mountain, minding his own business, and in comes some spotty-faced bounty hunter interested in only one thing, and isn't afraid to slaughter and lie his way to it. Think about it.
FF

Adapted from Fightingdantasy.blogspot.com

www.fightingfantasycollector.co.uk

In his introductory column, *Fighting Fantasy* collector **Jamie Fry** sets out his stall as to his pedigree with collecting *Fighting Fantasy* material of every kind, and explains what readers can expect of his column in future issues.

What a privilege it is to get a column in this inaugural edition of *Fighting Fantazine*. I get a lot of people contact me through my website asking how much a book is worth, how much they should sell them for or would I buy them off them. I rarely get anyone offering up undiscovered goodies to display on the website. Does that mean I can hold my head high and self profess to run a site that pretty much represents an on-line museum of all known *Fighting Fantasy* books and related collectables? I own most of the items shown but sadly not all. Nonetheless I have endeavoured to collect any image of items I still desire and you want to see.

Like a lot of people who stop by to reminisce with me, I grew up spending my paper round or odd job money on the latest *Fighting Fantasy* release from the outset. I guess that gives my age away to some extent and I will never regret all the hours spent immersed in those books. As things moved on, I missed out a big chunk of books in the middle and started buying the last few towards the end of the run, distracted temporarily by marriage and kids. Shamefully, I only ever held onto *Deathtrap Dungeon*, *House of Hell* and *Night Dragon*. Having resigned myself to the fact it was all over I had all but forgotten the world I spent a fair bit of my childhood in. That was until Wizard Books re-released the books in 2002.

Curiosity got the better of me and I started collecting and reading the old titles as well as the new special edition re-releases. It didn't take long to amass the green-spined versions from car boot sales, charity shops and some from ebay. I created Fightingfantasycollector.co.uk in 2004 because not one existing site could offer me an extensive dedicated resource of book cover variations and collectables. It was never my intention to explore the contents or world et cetera as this was already catered for on other popular sites. Other collectables and the harder to find and fund titles, eventually filled my shelves.

Truly obsessed, my collection stretched into sourcing every known cover version, artwork and anything, even basically, related.

Here we are in 2009, having thought all was lost again, instead a new title is being released (*Stormslayer*), another parody published, the cover versions are set to change again and *The Warlock of Firetop Mountain* will be released on Nintendo DS. It still amazes me what I find and remain intrigued at what is still out there. In future articles I hope to delve deeper into my site and share the history behind some of my finds, discuss variations and even attempt to set up valuation guidance.

In the meantime, if you have anything to share with me that I don't already know about, please contact me through my website. **FF**

COMING IN ISSUE #2 - JANUARY 2010

The Grass is Greener

The second part of the **Jonathan Green** interview, looking back to his Puffin published gamebooks for the range.

Shrine of the Salamander

by **Andrew Wright**

Hideous Horntoads from the Croaking Caves have stolen the sacred idol of Verlang! YOU are a forge-priest from the Copperstone Mines. Armed with just your warhammer and a head full of spells, can YOU enter the Croaking Caves and retrieve the idol from the Shrine of the Salamander?

bang!

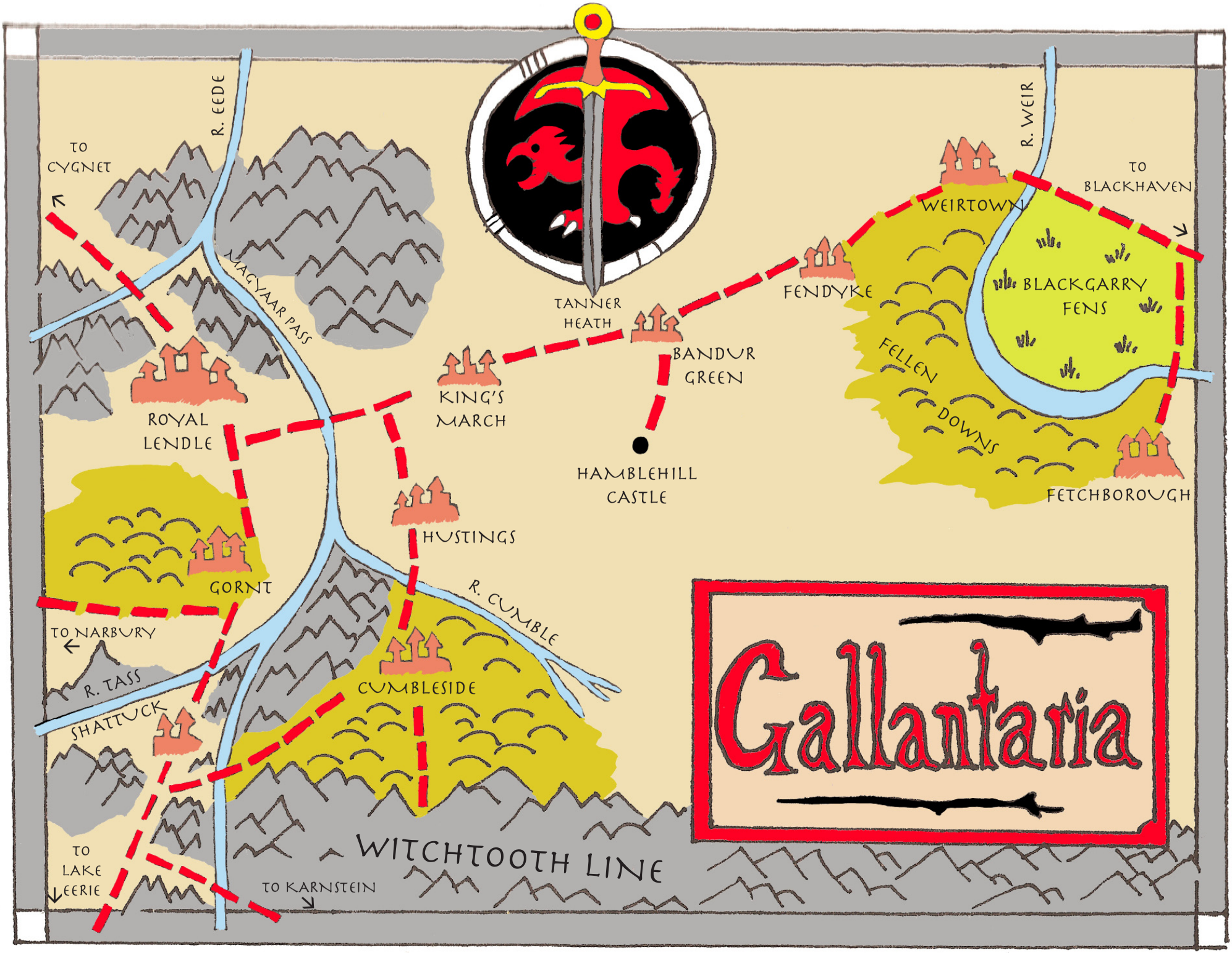
You thought *Fighting Fantasy* was all about swords and sorcery? Well think again. Get your earplugs ready as **Warren McGuire** shows how gunpowder changes battle on Titan forever!

STEVE JACKSON AND IAN LIVINGSTONE
HOWL OF THE WEREWOLF
BRAND NEW ADVENTURE
A Fighting Fantasy Gamebook in which YOU are the hero!

Howl of the Werewolf

Digging deep into the text and art, **Alexander Ballingall** brings you some things you may not have already known about this gamebook in another **Fact of Fiction**.

AND MUCH MORE...


Gallantaria
TO CYGNET
R. EEDE
MAGYAAR PASS
ROYAL LENDLE
GORNT
TO NARBURY
R. TASS
SHATTUCK
TO LAKE EERIE
KING'S MARCH
HUSTINGS
R. CUMBLE
CUMBLESIDE
TANNER HEATH
HAMBLEHILL CASTLE
BANDUR GREEN
FENDYKE
R. WEIR
WEIRTOWN
TO BLACKHAVEN
BLACKGARRY FENS
FELLEN DOWNS
FETCHBOROUGH
WITCHTOOTH LINE
TO KARNSTEIN